



12

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**PlayStation**  
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Gran Turismo, Tomb Raider 2, Tekken 2, Wipeout 2097, Crash Bandicoot 2, F1 '99, Q-Police, Tomb Raider, Ridge Racer Revolution, Outlander, Abe's Oddysee, Doom, Resident Evil

Everything you need to know about PlayStation's best ever games



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**Fact:** The Official UK PlayStation Magazine is the world's best-selling videogames magazine. The only magazine with an Official demo CD each and every month. PSM is also the best written and most clearly designed magazine on the shelves. This market leading position means that we can review games honestly and protect our readers interests, giving real opinions

rather than compromise our views in pursuit of an exclusive review or cover. PSM is the only magazine which really matters within the PlayStation industry for one reason - what we print is the truth. Whether it's about games, the industry and all things PlayStation, our writing is opinionated, honest and always informed. Links

with Sony provide exclusive information and game demos, but do not compromise our editorial stance. PSM is 100 per cent editorially independent - guaranteed. PSM is written in an adult, entertaining manner. Free from technical jargon, but with the necessary expertise that PlayStation owners demand. PSM drops the usual in-jokes and

infelicitous humour for quality. We tell you the latest news, talk to the most important people in the industry, discuss the most relevant issues and review the most exciting games on the planet. And with our demo disc, we do something no other PlayStation magazine can - we let you play the games for yourself. PSM: the world's best-selling videogames magazine.



Tomb Raider 2



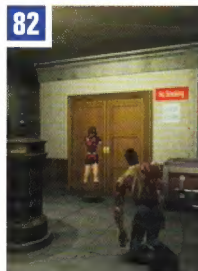
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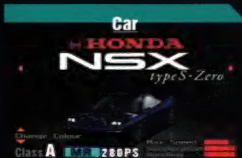
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ON THE CD



# Gran Turismo



PUBLISHER: SCE  
 STYLE: Racer  
 PROGRAM: Playable demo

Some have said that *Gran Turismo* is the best racer ever to hit the PlayStation. Some suggest that *Gran Turismo 2* (out in the autumn) is going to be the first perfect PlayStation game. And nobody can deny this one fact – *Gran Turismo* changed things. Shoddiness of racer would no longer be tolerated – if you wanted to get noticed you had to come up with something as good, if not better than *GT*. *Ridge Racer Type Four* tried... and almost got there. *TOCA 2* was forced to improve massively. And *V Rally 2* is another product of such high standards.

Think of a bee with huge knees. This game is (bizarrely) those knees. Everything in the game can be tweaked, twiddled and generally altered. Buy cars, sell cars, paint your car, take various driving tests. It's a world of pistons, flanges and ball valves. The real action, however, takes place on one of the 21 tracks. The handling is as real as you will get. That point needs to be emphasised – if you're looking for an arcade racer, take your business to *Ridge Racer Type Four*. This is the real deal. Sit at the grid, soaking up the ambience. The noise, the cars, the tension. The lights go green and we're off.

The demo is a timed race on the Clubman Stage route five. Three cars are available – as is that famous replay mode.

- Controls
  - ▶ to get menu after loading
  - D-pad Direction
  - ⊗ Accelerate
  - ⊙ brake
  - ⊖ Reverse
  - Ⓢ Emergency brake
  - Ⓢ Shift up
  - Ⓢ Shift down
  - Ⓢ Rear view
  - Ⓢ Change view

The game is Dual Shock compatible.

■ Additional features  
 In the full title in order to progress to more taxing racing, success in the driving test is essential. This manifests itself as a trial of both driving dexterity and speed. Only those with Cycling Proficiency or above need apply.

■ Further information  
 Way back when, *Gran Turismo* scored a mighty 10 out of 10 in *The Official PlayStation Magazine*. And no racer has come anything like close since! Now you can get hold of it for £20. Truly there is a God.



This is your demo, stop reading, load disc, play.

# Tomb Raider 2

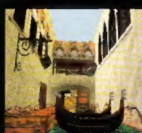


Run Lara, run like a girl in shorts, but try not too look too stupid.

■ PUBLISHER: Eidos  
■ STYLE: 3D arcade adventure  
■ PROGRAM: Playable demo

**I** 1997 was a great for the PlayStation. Developers finally realised that not only could they come up with excellent games, but that they could sell these excellent games to lots of people and then go out and buy themselves Ferraris and helicopters. All of which meant that, come Christmas 1997, there was a deluge of massive titles. Psygnosis leapt into the fray with *FI '97* and *G-Police*. *Final Fantasy VII* arrived, and to top it off, Lara Croft returned in the sequel to one of the most critically acclaimed PlayStation games ever, *Tomb Raider*. She then went on to appear on every style mag ever and woke the world up to what the PlayStation was all about. You can mock all you like but before this occurred you couldn't mention videogames without people thinking of anoraks and epilepsy. All of a sudden along with Oasis and the Union Jack videogames where the epitome of cool. And while Oasis have fallen silent and the Union Jack is just a daft old flag videogames are getting more and more important.

*Tomb Raider 2* saw Lara off on another *Indiana Jones*-style adventure, searching for the lost Dagger of Xian. A trinket that once belonged to some Chinese geezer and rumoured to have magical powers. Unfortunately, Lara wasn't alone in her quest – a number of other mysterious, and generally unsavoury groups were also seeking the power they believed the ancient weapon wielded. With far more action than the original it was only beaten off the Christmas Number one slot by yet another EA FIFA game.



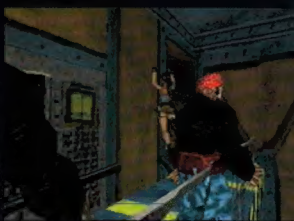
Our exclusive playable demo of the game features part of the first level, which takes place inside a secret tunnel complex hidden inside the Great Wall of China. As far as Lara's research can tell, it's here that the dagger should be found. Get involved – you simply won't be able to stop! And then, once you have completed the demo see if you can help yourself buying the full game.

#### ■ Controls

- ↑ Run
- ↓ Hop Backwards
- Ⓢ Diving roll
- ⓧ Action (fire guns, grab ledges, pull switches).

#### ■ Additional features

This demo is just a small part of a truly enormous game – *Tomb Raider 2* dwarfs its predecessor in scale. And then there's *Tomb Raider 3*...



Leap Lara, leap like a big girl's house.





ON THE CD

# Tekken 2



**PUBLISHER:** SCE  
**STYLE:** Beat 'em up  
**PROGRAM:** Playable demo

Once the ultimate master of all it surveyed and now, in the churning, white-water wake of *Tekken 3* it is the proud owner of a different crown: the best value beat 'em up money can buy. Well, until *Tekken 3* goes Platinum, that is...

Okay, we'll stop teasing you. *Tekken 2* is a member of that most exclusive of clubs: *The Official PlayStation Magazine* 10/10 crew. And even though there's been another *Tekken* in the meantime, we see no reason to change that score. This is pure beat 'em up genius in motion and simply the best £20 you'll ever spend. If you don't believe us just look at the column inches this magazine and its sister *The Official PlayStation Magazine* have spent on any one of the *Tekken* titles. *The Official PlayStation Beat 'em Up Special* should have been called *The Official Tekken Special*.

For *Tekken 2* two new characters were added to the original cast of eight for this fine sequel, and most happily you can play them in the demo. Lei Wulong is a Hong Kong policeman with a penchant for flares and braces (the kind to keep your pants up, not the tooth kind) and a splendid play-dead manoeuvre. And Jun is a Japanese lass who practices Bujitsu (just don't ask OK?). Pick one of these fine opponents and await your randomly generated opponent for a best-of-three rounds scrap. Each button represents a limb – this is what makes the game so frightfully intuitive. Press the square and X buttons at the same time to perform a



relatively simple special manoeuvre. Now try the circle and triangle together for another kind of a manoeuvre altogether.

This is an astonishing game, and remember, it had to be good. No tired sequels here – one million people had bought the original and weren't going to be impressed with anything smacking of same-old same-old. Beautiful visuals combined are with, er, aces gameplay, *Tekken 2* is what owning a PlayStation is all about: having fun and being pretend violent

**Controls**  
 △ Right arm  
 ○ Left arm  
 ⊙ Right foot  
 ⊗ Left foot

**Additional features**  
 Heavens, where to begin? Add a host of bosses and sub-bosses, piles of gaming options and more views. It's the business.

**Further information**  
 Rumours have it the next in the *Tekken* series to hit PlayStation will be a conversion of *Tekken Tag Tournament*.



Uh-oh, it's that old, kneeling down and praying to a deity with a really long and weird name manoeuvre again. Still it looks like it's done the trick, Lei's little feet are kicking up a bit of dust too, which is nice.

# Wipeout 2097

## Problems with your CD?

Put in your troublemaker disc, make a 30-second envelope and send it back to the following address. We will test it and, if it is faulty, we'll send you another CD.

Official PlayStation Magazine Ltd, Future Publishing, 100 Brookside Drive, Suite 200, Secaucus, NJ 07094, USA

■ PUBLISHER: Psygnosis  
■ STYLE: Racing game  
■ PROGRAM: Playable demo

**Y**es, there's a third one on the way sometime in the autumn – and it's looking fantastic by the way – but *Wipeout 2097* is still unrivalled in terms of future racers at this very moment in time. And it's unrivalled in terms of price too – we found it for a ridiculously cheap £14.99 in some high street stores. It pays to shop around...

Anyway, although *Wipeout 2097*'s now well over two years old, the graphics still look fresh and the gameplay is absolutely mind-blowingly fast and furious. Race your sled round the circuits of the future, dodging the mines, firing off the unbelievably satisfying missiles and going hell for leather just to get that precious speed burst. Often imitated, but never, ever bettered, the only game to come anywhere near it is... the original *Wipeout*. And that's no exaggeration. The wonderful design, the glorious tracks, the cool music – this was a benchmark PlayStation release, bringing videogaming into clubs, onto records and into the homes of people who never thought they'd buy videogames ever again. Thankfully this demo features one of the best tracks in the entire game, the undulating nonsense that is Gare D'Europa. Lumped into the Rapier Class bracket, what you have here is a two-lap race and the choice of Novice or Expert modes. And once you've mastered it you simply won't be able to stop. That much we absolutely guarantee. If you like your realism you might be better off with *Gran Turismo*. But every so often, realism's just a little bit boring, isn't it?

■ Controls  
D-Pad: Steer your craft



Ramping tunes, like, uh, wild graphics, burr-ill-y-ant design (by crayon monkeys) Designers Republic. That, dear human, is *Wipeout*.

- Ⓒ Change view
- Ⓒ Discard weapon
- Ⓒ Fire
- Ⓒ Thrust
- Ⓒ Right airbrake
- Ⓒ Left airbrake

■ Additional features  
Link-up option, loads of tracks, craft, secret things, Prodigy, Chemical Brothers, Designers Republic... come on!

■ Further information  
*Wipeout 3* has got a split-screen, two-player mode!



Zooming, p-chow-ing and blasting your way through lush race tracks is a big, fun thing.

# ON THE CD

## Crash Bandicoot 2

**PUBLISHER:** SCEE  
**STYLE:** Platform game  
**PROGRAM:** Playable demo

**T**here were an inordinate amount of months between the first and second installments of *Crash Bandicoot*, and that added amount of code-crunching and sketch-making certainly seemed to do the job. He took his time about it, but the platform-lovin', nasally-unchallenged marsupial returned in *Crash Bandicoot 2*, and it was platforming action at its very best. Unfortunately, the nefarious Doc Cortex was back with him, and tricked the cute, lil' fella into collecting the purple crystals which will somehow help him conquer the world. Yes, we never did work out what all that meant did we? Still, would our Crash see through Cortex's tissue of lies, or was he destined forever to remain a stooge for a weirdy-beardy evil type bloke? Well, that's for you to find out in this recent Platinum release. What we can reveal, though, is that you'll have one serious amount of fun doing so. This time out, *Crash* boasts fully texture-mapped 3D over the original's 2D stylings, and as you'll see from this most playable of demos, Naughty Dog has performed absolute wonders.

The demo itself features an appropriately wintry level from *Crash 2*. Jump through the door and the first thing you'll spot is a polar bear cub



Ride the polar bear and leap by the whales, no... while on the polar bear.

which is both doe of eye and button of nose. Jump on Mr Cub's hairy back to begin one super slippery ride past killer whales, exploding crates, malevolent seals and totem poles which have a habit of coming down on our hero like a ton of bricks. There're plenty of apples to munch and life bonuses to bolster the six you begin with, but your main job is to avoid the



nasties, leap over crevices and hang on 'til the end of what will be the bizarrest, possibly only, sledge-type ride you'll undertake this summer. And we'll further guarantee that after this one snipetty clip of this vast game will have you staring all wistfully at that £20 burning a hole in your over-excited pocket.



Timing the jumps is of the utmost importance, unless you aren't playing *Crash*, in which case it counts for naught. Nevertheless this is a fast-paced arctic ramp that has no equal in the Platform stakes and could well have been the inspiration for the up-coming *Crash Racing* - which promises to be a hoot and a half. And that's what you get for big captions, lots of information.

### Controls

Throughout the first level pay close attention to the info screens as they hold the secrets to some of the special manoeuvres required in the game. Here are some of the basic controls to get you started.

- ↑ Steer forward
- ↓ Steer back
- ← Steer left
- Steer right
- ⊙ Pull down score menu
- ⊙ Speed boost
- ⊙ N/A
- ⊙ Jump
- ⊙ Speed boost

### Additional features

27 infuriating levels of platforming await you on the full version, all of them playable with the Analog pad.

### Further information

*Crash Bandicoot 2* earned itself a more than respectable 8/10 when we first reviewed it, and has aged well.



# Formula 1 '97



- **DEVELOPER:** Psygnosis
- **STYLE:** Racing sim
- **PROGRAM:** Playable demo

**B**y the time last year's *F1 '96* hit the streets, there was a real atmosphere of feverish anticipation. People were crowding the streets, videogames and racing games were the talk of the nation and the changeable weather took a back seat for once. And then the game was released, swiftly to go down in history as the most disappointing – make that, you know?, just plain rubbish – sequel we've ever seen, you've ever seen and has ever been made. But the reason for all the kerfuffle in the first place was the show-stopping greatness of the preceding title *F1 '97*. Which remains the best Formula One racing simulation there is. So let's forget last year's nightmare and concentrate on the positive, we're sure Psygnosis would prefer that.

It was a good deal more sophisticated than the previous effort too (which went by the name of *Formula 1* and had a reputation for being, just like Herbie, a little buggy), the developers being one of the first to use the PlayStation's hi-res mode for all of the in-game graphics.

The differences between the Arcade mode (which you play here) and Grand Prix modes are massive, with two very different styles of racing required. In the Arcade mode you can chuck the car around corners, fling it into powerslides and not worry about the slightest bump ending your game. But try any of this in the Grand Prix mode, and your race will be over very quickly indeed. There are masses of options too, from damage to real-life mechanical breakdowns (only have this on if you like being annoyed – it's incredibly frustrating to have your fuel line break within sight of the chequered flag).

The demo allows you to take the Benetton car through its paces around

the wonderful curves of Silverstone in Arcade mode. After 90 seconds, the demo returns to the menu screen. You can control the car with either the normal D-pad or a Negcon.

- **Controls**
- D-pad Direction
- ⊙ Accelerate
- ⓧ brake
- △/□ change view

■ **Additional features**  
Murray Walker's still there in all his excitable glory.

■ **Further information**  
*F1'99* is not being made by the people who made the absolutely dreadful *F1 '98*. Now why would that be we wonder, in mock seriousness.



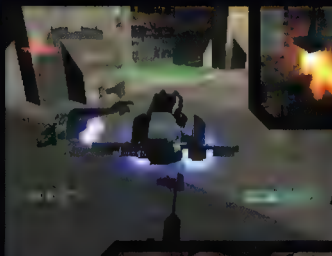
This looks seriously like some kind of demon car. But it isn't so come out from behind the sofa.



Easily the best Formula One licensed game to come out of the PlayStation, bearing any effort by the EA team. This is a startlingly good game and a real stayer too.

# ON THE CD

## G-Police



■ **PLAY (SYSTEM)** PlayStation  
 ■ **STYLE:** Flight aim/shoot 'em up  
 ■ **VIDEO/GAME:** Playable demo

**P**lotting a *G-Police* Mavic Gunship is an experience denied to most mortals, when we say most, we actually mean all, but thanks to Psygnosis (don't mention *F1*, '98 oh no) the chance to bomb around a futuristic cityscape while blasting the gubbins out of hoverships and neon hoardings was enjoyed by hundreds of thousands of people groovy enough to own a PlayStation and the *Blade Runner*-tastic



*Copter Cops* from the *Planet Plod* was our suggestion for the title of the *G-Police* sequel but it was turned down in favour of *G*, which has a kind of ring to it don't you think?

best plots that a videogame has ever come up with, including a great deal of PC releases which is another feather in the cap for Psygnosis. We just can't wait for a two-player version.

- **Controls**
  - ↑ move up
  - ↓ nose down
  - bank left
  - ← bank right
  - accelerate
  - /△ scroll through weapons
  - ⊙ reverse
  - ⊙ fire
  - Target
  - Air brake
  - Hover tip
  - Hover down
  - Change view

■ **Additional features**  
 The full version includes several training missions to hone those flying skills. And they don't half come in handy, although the game does build in intensity as you play through.

■ **Further information**  
*G-Police 2* is very much on the way. But the original is still well worth it, well of course it is it's only going to cost you £20 and if you don't believe us then why not have a go and see if we're wrong. Go on.

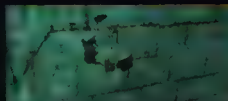
*G-Police*. A stylish mishmash of *Syndicate Wars*, *Gunship 2000* and Saturday afternoon fave *Airwolf*, *G-Police* succeeded because it had its fair share of shoot 'em up appeal combined with a host of missions and airborne gang members to fry. But with sophisticated controls and intuitive response, it was also a flight sim of mighty proportions. It was, then, everything you could possibly want in a game and we loved it to bits.

Our demo is a perfect taste of the futuristic carnage that so denotes *G-Police*. Even if we do say so ourselves, and we do. All right? Using the red arrow of your gunship's on-screen radar to navigate, soar around the city and use your R1 button to lock on the various targets and zap everything that moves. But remember – the action heats up the longer you remain alive so do keep an eye on those shields. Retreat might not be the done thing but skulking behind skyscrapers, using the L1 and L2 buttons to hover and then letting off a blazing round of plasma bolts certainly is...

The full title also boasts one of the

Well, take a guess. We haven't a clue what's happening.

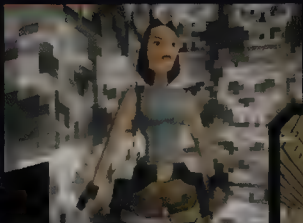
# Tomb Raider



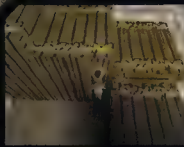
■ PUBLISHER: Core Design  
 ■ STYLE: 3D adventure  
 ■ PROGRAM: Playable demo

**I**f it is – hard, irrefutable evidence that *Tomb Raider II* indeed the best 3D adventure game you are likely to behold.

Explore the entire first level of *Tomb Raider*, revealing in the expansive environment as you unearth its secrets, face its dangers, and still have time to admire its beauty. Don't expect this to be an easy ride, though – you have chasms to leap, blocks to push, switches to pull and pools to swim in, if you are to reach your goal.



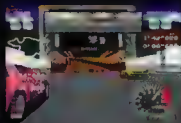
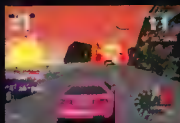
**Backs to the wall** Mrs. Lara tries, unsuccessfully, to hide round a corner.



# Ridge Racer Revolution

■ PUBLISHER: SCE  
 ■ STYLE: Racing sim  
 ■ PROGRAM: Playable demo

**Y**ou probably didn't imagine that there would ever be a playable demonstration of *Ridge Racer*, what with it having just the one track and all. *Ridge Racer Revolution*, however, has three of the blighters and our friends at Sony have kindly proffered one lap of the Novice level for your detection. Good of them, we think you'll agree. In fact, securing this title for the CD, although it has been



**The purple car is zooming and zooming. Zoom with it. Go, on zoom. Zooooom. Avoid traps.**

out there before, was one of the main aims of the whole Platinum Special team and we had to petition Sony for 12 years (or something like that) to get them close to getting us this title on the demo.

As far as playing the game goes forget everything you learned in the original, for the slightest on-off-on petrol scenario sends you pirouetting wildly across the road. Which, when you're racing in a car is one of those mild irritations that can send your mittened fists into furiously thrashing paradiddles of pique.

So, to avoid bashing the dash practice nudging the buttons when you want to powerslide – you'll get there eventually. The most important test is your lap time. If you're travelling at under one minute and 10 seconds then you're really going some – although we travel a lot quicker than this, but you'll

never beat us because you'll never know our lap times.

You can even play your own music to the demo, if you really want to: swap the discs on the starting line, although you'll have to reset the machine at the end of the race. And you'll only be out there for a minute and a bit, so make it a punk classic and bang on down the track. It's great, particularly in two-player mode.

■ Controls  
 ⓧ Accelerate  
 Ⓞ Brake  
 Ⓞ Change view

■ Additional features  
 More tracks, loads of cars and some rather nifty buggies – if you can shoot down the aliens in less than 44 shots. Or something.

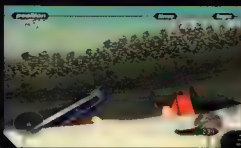


you're in a wide open space. You are.



# ON THE CD

## Porsche Challenge



**This look it's just like you in a Porsche, with a cute little bob.**

**PUBLISHER:** Ubisoft  
**TYPE:** Racing  
**PROGRAM:** Playable demo

**W** e still love this. It's absolutely run over by *Gran Turismo*, but for pure split-screen racing antics in a beautiful car, *Porsche Challenge* takes a lot of beating.

And within *Porsche Challenge* lies a

cheaters' paradise, too. Get through to the interactive tracks and everything appears normal. That's until you see several of the cars that were behind you on the first lap suddenly ahead of you on the second. How could this be? Well, they've taken advantage of the short cuts that appear at certain parts of the race. And then disappear again.

You get to race on the simplest course in the game, at Porsche's Stuttgart test track. It's just one player but you'll have enough trouble for 16 of you trying to get through the checkpoints in the time allotted.

### Controls

- ⬆ Accelerate
- ⬇ Horn
- ⬆ Reverse
- ⬇ Brake

### Additional features

Only four tracks there may be, but open everything up and you're looking at 24 different variations!

### Further information

EA now have the license to use the Porsche name. Nobody else can have their cars in their games. Not even *GT2*.



**You're fifth, mate. That's a pear.**

## Oddworld: Abe's Oddyssey

**PUBLISHER:** GT Interactive  
**TYPE:** 2D platformer  
**PROGRAM:** Playable demo

**W** and. That's *Abe's Oddyssey*. You see by rights it shouldn't have sold as hugely as it had. It's a 2D platformer. It's got a colour scheme of dark brown and green and it's also deeply infuriating. Yet it's also one of the cleverest, most fun adventure games you'll ever play. And yes we admit it. It's bloody great.

You play Abe, a slimy green chap who stumbles across plans to convert his race into a new range of tasty

snacks. During your surveillance you're spotted by the evil Sligs and are forced to make a break for freedom. Which you might (after staying up for weeks) well do. But there are two endings, and which one you receive depends on how you treated your fellow Mudokons along the way.

Talking to these Mudokons is one of the best parts of *Abe's Oddyssey*. You have to beg, cajole and praise your way into their affections. Only then will you be able to get them to help solve the multitude of puzzles. And listening to them saying 'okay' is one of the most satisfying – and amusing – moments in videogame history. Honestly.

To guide you on your way, you ought to pay attention to the scrolling notices which tell you exactly how to pull off certain moves. So that's going to help you out isn't it. For the purpose of the demo, you can only go as far as the outskirts of Rupture Farms, but the full game takes in an awful lot more, with Abe visiting temples, moons and mountain ranges.

- Controls**
- D-Pad left, right
  - ⬆ jump
  - ⬇ run

### sneak

- ⬆ chant/possess slig/explode
- slig when unday your knelt

### Gamespeak

- Hold ⬆ and press
- ⬆ hello
- ⬆ angry
- ⬆ stay here
- ⬆ follow me

### Hold ⬆ and press

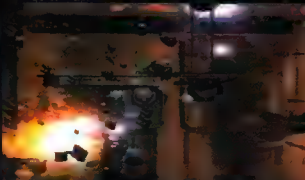
- ⬆ whistle
- ⬆ fart
- ⬆ whistle 2
- ⬆ laugh

### Additional features

This demo is just a very small part of the game – the complete version of *Abe's Oddyssey* is vast. From Rupture Farms you move on to the cliffs of Oddworld before stumbling into the Land of the Big Heads and even stranger places.

### Further information

Oddworld weren't going to do another 2D platformer, but pure public pressure made them give way. And the result is *Oddworld: Abe's Oddyssey* and everybody liked it, so it wasn't such a stupid idea in the first place now was it?



Escape from Oddworld with your bizzarro mate.



LOADING

33% COMPLETE



## TEKKEN 3: CHEAP THRILLS

THE KING OF FIGHTERS MAKES ITS PLATINUM BOW



[1] Paul eats dirt. [2] Everyone wins now it's C20. [3] All over for Eddy. [4] 'Take your hands off me.' [5] Hwoarang gets acquainted with the long arm of Law. [6] Head over heels with Joy. [7] The news of Tekken 3's Platinum release was too much for some. [8] Look out, he's behind you.

[1,2] This superlative quality of game for £20 marks a new and welcome era for the PlayStation.



**T**ekken 3 exploded onto the market less than a year ago. One of the most eagerly-awaited games of all time eventually appeared after much rumour-mongering and speculation in September 1998, but the wait had been well worth it. A slew of perfect marks from the games press quickly followed and no-one was in any doubt about what Namco had created – the best fighting game ever, no question.

Even now, all these months later, it's still one of the best selling and most popular of all PlayStation games and has firmly cemented its place as one of the finest console games of any genre ever. So it's great for everyone, then, that you will soon be able to pick up this champion beat 'em up for a measly £20.

The Platinum release of Tekken 3 is a milestone in PlayStation history, and follows the recent high-profile releases of *Gran Turismo* and *Final Fantasy VII* on



Sony's budget label. It's hard to believe that the best three PlayStation games available will be only £20 each, but that's progress for you.

Easily satisfying the Platinum qualification criteria of 500,000 copies sold in the first six months of release, Tekken 3 is worth a place in any games

collection bereft of this most splendid of titles. Nothing has come close to its all-round excellence, so the 50 per cent drop in price really does afford those who haven't been tempted so far (shockingly, only about one in eight UK PlayStation owners already possess it) the chance to buy the best game in the highly



## TAG TEAM TEKKEN HERE

So with *Tekken 3* doing the half price, new silver-coloured cover thing, there needs to be a brand new Iron Fist Tournament to take its place. It's only logical since that's the way things have passed out before. Thankfully, history is going to repeat itself but things are different now.



*Tekken Tag Tournament* is the next game in Namco's wonderful line and before you ask, no, it's not *Tekken 4* (a game with just such a title is planned, but as for when and on which platform, the official word has not yet been spoken and is unlikely to for a good few months yet) but more a halfway house appetiser for the enormous fourth installment. A *Tekken 3.5*, if you will, because TTT is something quite different from the usual fare.

As its name suggests, this new beat 'em up incorporates that time-honoured wrestling staple, the tag team. Two heads, as they say, are better than one, so two sets of lethal, muscular arms and legs are also going to be an advantage. The premise is simple. Standard *Tekken* action leader in its field, that is enhanced by the addition of a partner in crime, called up by a button press during a particularly threatening moment in a bout. You can then use the new guy's freshness and lack of bruising to finish off your unfortunate opponent.



However, all is not as it seems. Both members of a tag team will share just one energy bar and so the timing of the doubling-up is crucial. A reinvigoration of the damage done by throws and mid-air attacks also means that you can't just pummel any schmuck who happens to get in the ring beside you. Much thought has gone into this, as is usual for a Namco title, and old faces such as Ganryu and Baek return to the fray after missing out on *Tekken 3* duties.

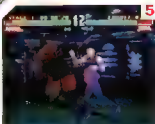
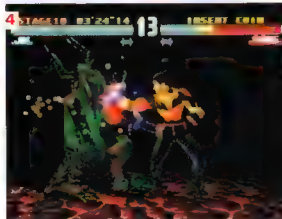
As the game is being put together for the arcade version using System 12 technology (as

used for PlayStation games) it seems highly likely that TTT will make an appearance on the console before next year.



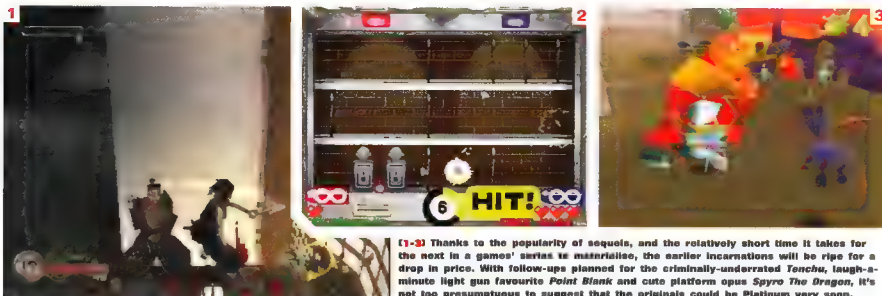
competitive fighting field for twenty of your Earth quids.

October is the date pencilled in for *Tekken 3*'s budget-price bow and it's certain to figure in the frenzied run-up to Christmas – especially if *Tekken Tag Tournament* materialises around then as well (see the story above) – so don't be surprised to find a silver-clad Nina Williams sticking out of your stocking on December 25. What a fine present that would be.



(1) Heihachi and Jun trade blows. (2) Sam cutting edge, but at a Platinum price. Wonderful. (3) We can't hear to watch. (4) Ogre comes in for a hammering. (5) The lovely Nina Williams in action. (6) Lei lying down on the job. (7) You'll do yourself a damage doing that.





[1-3] Thanks to the popularity of sequels, and the relatively short time it takes for the next in a games' series to materialise, the earlier incarnations will be ripe for a drop in price. With follow-ups planned for the criminally-underrated *Tenchu*, laugh-a-minute light gun favourite *Point Blank* and cute platform opus *Spyro the Dragon*, it's not too presumptuous to suggest that the originals could be Platinum very soon.

## PARTY LIKE IT'S £19.99

MORE CLASSIC GAMES TO 'DO THE SILVER THING.'

**T**here's never been a better time to be into PlayStation. The new games get better while some of the great old ones get cheaper. And it's not just tat being peddled as Platinum either. The next few months could see still more genuine classics gracing our shelves at a pocket-friendly £20.

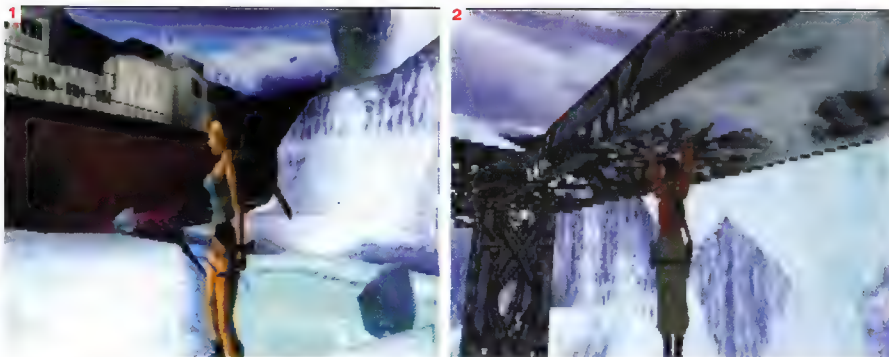
Many people like to moan about the number of sequels being released, but if it means that earlier (and still brilliant despite newer versions supposedly improving things) incarnations are repackaged in a

box with a silvery front, then it's a bonus point. Witness *Resident Evil 2*, *Final Fantasy VII* and *Gran Turismo* getting the Platinum treatment in the wake of their soon-to-hit-the-shops sequels.

So what other gems have we to look forward to? *Tekken 3* we know about, but other leading titles are certain to tumble as their sequels appear. *Spyro the Dragon* is a much more attractive prospect at £20, and could well find itself selling for just that when *Spyro 2* appears before the end of the year. Any EA Sports game suffixed with

'98, *Tenchu*, *Point Blank* – the list of quality product is long and impressive, ensuring maximum interest in the original. PlayStation before its next generation brother comes along. Which is excellent for all concerned, really.

And what with Lara Croft's fourth outing firmly in the pipeline for December, *Tomb Raider 3* could very feasibly be parting us from twenty quid's worth of our hard-earned by Christmas. Speculation, you say? Just remember where you saw it first.



[1,2] Could last year's Christmas Croft adventure become this year's stocking filler? *Tomb Raider 3* is a good each-way bet for a switch to Platinum status in the near future, thanks to the fourth in Lara's quests being mooted for release in December. A winter treat too good to pass up, we suggest.

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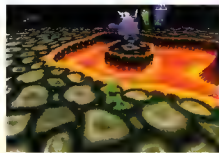
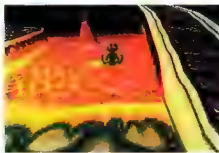
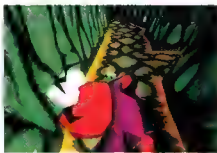
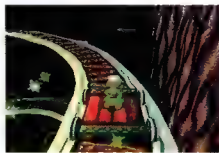
MEGASTORES

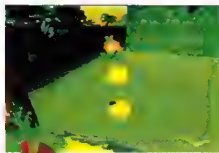
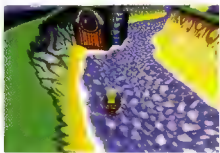


# CROC COMPETITION

# WIN!

## FOUR £500 STEREOS!





Croc was a pioneer of 3D PlayStation platforming and as such fully deserves its Platinum membership. To celebrate its ongoing success and the forthcoming sequel, Fox Interactive have supplied us with £2000 of sexy kit to pass on to you, the punters. These rather attractive Technics hi-fi come with snazzy blue lights, ultra-cool toggle switches and a remote control. They sound pretty damned fine too. *Best Of Britain*

## QUESTION:

How do crocodiles reproduce?

**IS IT;**

- a) EGGS
- b) MAGIC
- c) LUCK

**SEND YOUR ANSWER TO:**

CROC COMPO,  
OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION PLATINUM SPECIAL  
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BATH  
BA1 2BW

NO EMPLOYEES OF FUTURE PUBLISHING OR FOX INTERACTIVE ARE ALLOWED TO ENTER THE COMPETITION... CHEATING. SEE? NO MULTIPLE ENTRIES PLEASE AND THE LAST DATE FOR ENTRIES IS 10 SEPTEMBER, 1999

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# PlayTest

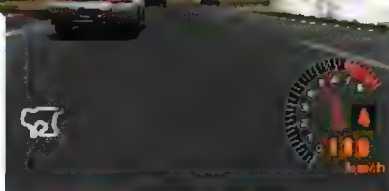
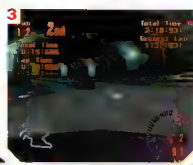
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# PlayStation

(1) Driving the slower saloon cars is good grounding for when you graduate to the real beasts.  
 (2) The in-car view provides the racer with frighteningly fast action. (3) One of those beasts in action. Handle with care.  
 (4) More in-car chasing.



# Gran Turismo

The racing game where the only thing missing is the smell of burning brake discs.

Get ready for the drive of your life with *Gran Turismo*...



It's rare for a game to live up to the sort of hype that Sony's racer received in the build up to its release in May last year. And prior to its UK debut *Gran Turismo* already had its critics - people who rightly pointed out that the music in the Japanese version was dire and that, at least in the bog-standard Arcade mode, the game ran a little too slowly. Both are fair comments; both aimed at the Japanese release.

In answer to those criticisms, the UK PAL release runs approximately 25 per cent faster. New music, including tracks from Ash and Garbage, was included, all mixed up by best-mesters The Chemical Brothers. The core of the game remains the same, though, with minor additions (a few extra cars from Aston Martin and TVR, for instance), a couple of omissions and, of course, English text.

So, what makes *GT* different from all the other racers on the market? For starters, the graphics. You can't fault *Gran Turismo* in the instant gratification stakes - you see it moving and fall in love. Instantly - we have found no exception to this anywhere ever. The attention to detail is frighteningly good, with virtually no pop-ups, screen glitches or clipping errors, thereby ensuring the track, cars and scenery are all totally solid and believable. And the speed at which you travel? It's not only quick, but also realistic - you can really tell the difference between a Primera and a Viper, and you can even subtly appreciate the differences in perceived speed when you gently tune your car to squeeze a little more power from its engine.

Likewise, the sound of the engines is so entirely right it's hard not to believe





**PUBLISHER:** Sony **DEVELOPER:** Polyphony  
**RELEASE DATE:** May 1998 **ORIGIN:** Japan  
**PRICE:** £19.99 **STYLE:** Racing sim

## NAME THAT BADGE

There are 10 companies which have agreed to license their model types to Sony for *Gran Turismo*, representing car makers from Japan, America and England. Here's the complete list. Lovers of marques such as Porsche and Ferrari might be disappointed, though GT2 will include many more.



The Aston Martin is an exceptional motor car.



Flash, muscular - the Viper from Chrysler is superb.



Blackpool-based TVR shows off its best model.



Prefer purple? You can change the car's colour.



Faster than the Mazda, but way off the big performers.



Another Japanese marque, the greatest Mitsubishi.



The Skyline can be tweaked to more than 800 bhp.



Superb NSX, though PSM prefers it in canary yellow.



Mr McRae swears by Subaru. 'Tn Ford made a better offer



The Corvette can be tough to drive around the bends.

you're sat in the cockpit of one of the, oh, 300 or so cars that are built into the game. Yep, that's right - there are hundreds of models to choose from in GT, and in the Simulation mode (which was called Gran Turismo mode in the Japanese version of the title), each one can be tweaked and upgraded in several dozen ways. Each car, and each variant of each car, drives differently from all the others, replicating to a 'T' what the real-life model feels like to drive.

So, is that just a myth? Well, this particular reviewer can't claim to have driven every car GT boasts, but he has driven around 10 of them extensively, from the relatively slow Honda Prelude, through the fairly porky MR2, to the awesome Nissan Skyline GTR V-spec, and can assure you the Gran Turismo representations are absolutely bang on. This is an

incredible feat of programming.

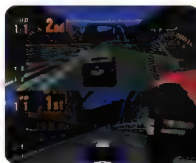
But it doesn't matter if the driving experience is correct if the game's no fun to play, does it? Thankfully, *Gran Turismo* far from disappoints in this department.

As you've probably already gathered, there are two basic modes of play: Arcade and Simulation. The Arcade mode is split into one-player races, where you choose a car from a limited selection of vehicles and race through an initial four tracks. If you win these, you earn goodies, such as more tracks upon which to demonstrate your racing prowess. It's all fairly jolly and light hearted, and if this was all GT comprised, you'd be perfectly happy.

In addition, though, there's a two-player mode, where you race split-screen over a distance of between two and 30 laps. This is every bit as fast and as

## COME AND HAVE A GO...

One of the sexiest of the 'minor' features of the game is the GT two-player mode. Here you and your rival each place your memory cards, with your GT screen on them, in the two slots in the PlayStation. Wait a couple of minutes and the individual, tweaked cars that are in each of your garages appear in a list, enabling you to race your tuned creation against those of your pals. How cool is that?







(1) The flatter, smaller courses look friendly enough but provide a real test of your technical skills. (2,3) Naturally, the night-time races are the perfect place to goggle at Gran Turismo's advanced lighting routines. (4) You've caught him, but can you get around for 5th place? (5) The circuit scenery is varied - if you get the time to look!

## POWER TO THE PEOPLE

**T**he really fast cars in *GT* are, well, bloody expensive, but there is a cheaper way to serious amounts of power: take your second-hand banger and tune the knackers off the thing. It's essential to build a rounded machine - there's no point being able to hit 150 mph if your brakes aren't able to slow you down enough to take the next corner. And that's why there are no fewer than 10 categories of equipment you can play about with on a *GT* car. Most of those categories have further divisions so there are, in fact, a total of 19 different parts you can alter. Take a bog-standard Skyline, say, and you can reduce its weight, up its engine parts and turbocharger to produce 912 bhp (rather than the standard 280 bhp), give it racing brakes, suspension and tyres and even paint it in a racing colour scheme. Providing, of course, you've got the money...



furious as the one-player game, though you get the added satisfaction of beating your mates.

Completing the Arcade mode is a Time Trial section, but that's pretty dull, as is the whole Arcade mode

when compared to the Simulation mode. **This is where the immense depth to *GT*'s gameplay becomes apparent.** In this element of the game, you're initially confronted by a map of a city. On that map is your home, garages for 10 car manufacturers, a car wash, a licence test centre, a car-testing track and the **Go Race** area, from which you can access the five types of race available in this mode.

Going straight to your home, you notice you've got 10,000 credits to spend, and no car, so it's off to the city's showrooms searching for a motor. You quickly realise that 10 grand isn't a lot of dosh, so you have to opt for an underpowered, second-hand motor with which to break your driving teeth. A quick visit to your own garage (which is at your home, naturally) gets you some basic information on your car's stat stacs and model history.

Now it's off to the races. And you immediately hit



upon a problem. All the decent, money-winning races are restricted - you need a racing licence, and what's more, there are three grades of licence for the differing race difficulties. So you need to visit the city's licence centre and take a series of exams, each of which tests your abilities in basic driving skills (or at least, they're pretty basic for your bog-standard 'B' licence, but they get a lot harder when you're trying to earn an 'A' licence or the super-tickety 'International A' certificate).



IN ADDITION, THERE'S A TWO-PLAYER MODE WHICH IS EVERY BIT AS FAST AND FURIOUS AS THE ONE-PLAYER GAME.

# Gran Turismo

## WHERE TO RACE

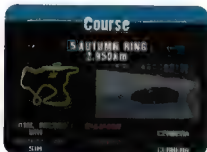
There are many tracks in *Gran Turismo*, but there are eight core places you'll find yourself again and again. All of these (and their mirror versions) can be accessed for practice in the Spot Race race type in Simulation mode. And eight can be played in the Arcade mode, too. They are...

### High Speed Ring



Don't worry too much about the brakes here. Pedal to the metal!

### Autumn Ring



The Autumn Ring needs to be treated with respect. But it's okay.

### Trial Mountain



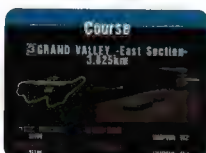
Again, fairly easy driving but there are one or two surprises en route.

### Deep Forest



Tree-lined, with some nasty bends but many overtaking opportunities.

### Grand Valley - East



A massive, super-fast straight is followed by a treacherous curve.

### Special Stage



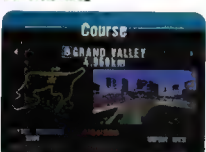
Another night course, rather tricky with just the one speedy straight.

### Clubman Stage



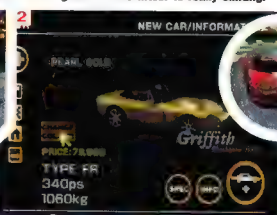
This circuit very much depends on how you react to night driving.

### Grand Valley



'Please Drive Carefully' signs should have been erected here.

- 1) This is where you need your wits about you. The car view is extremely fast, and you may get bumped and lose your bearings. 2) Go on, roast yourself. You can specify the colour of new cars. 3) Up against the big boys. 4) 140 km/h with two wheels off the ground - this driver is really stinging.



After spending a few hours getting your B licence, you get a bit tired of testing your abilities against yourself, and at least now you've got access to some of the money-earning races.

So it's back to the Go Race area on the map, into the GT League and the Sunday Cup tournament (the lowest grade, and one which earns you reasonable, though not fantastic, amounts of dough). Each race requires a qualifying lap to determine where you start on the grid of six.



# PlayTest

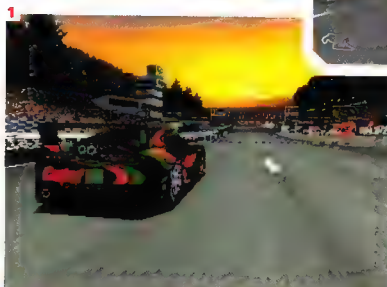


(1) Gran Turismo provides the best split-screen racing on the PlayStation. (2) Don't forget to watch the road while you're gloating. (3) He's there for the taking, surely? (4) No. One lap on, and your opponent is slowly pulling away. (5) Did we mention that the replays are simply stunning? (6) Told you. (7) Our favourite license test. Powerslide around these tyres five times within the time limit. (8) Ooh, menu. (9) Out and round. (10,11) Gentlemen... (12) The parts. (13) The cars.



# Gran Turismo

[1] Closing on the finish line, but it looks like you've lost out this time. [2] You've got a spectacular S bend coming. Take it right and you'll be leading. [3] Build up speed here. [4] Watch the road! [5] That's not very nice, now, is it?



cars, and if you get pole you earn yourself some bonus credits.

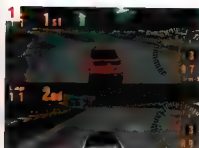
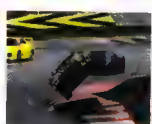
The Cup lasts for three races, during which time it's possible to earn yourself a maximum of 27,000 credits. Driving the crappy car you've started out with, you find you only earn 9,000, but that's enough to take the car back to the manufacturer's garage and get some of the parts upgraded – the engine, say, or the brakes, or the transmission, or just about anything else you care to think of.

From here on in, you do some more racing, earning yourself some more money. You get your car tuned so it's pretty quick and you decide to try for your A licence so you can take part in some more of the 20 race types over the 21 various tracks. You earn more money, fix your old car, buy a new one, race a bit more, upgrade, race, tune, race, consider taking your final series of exams, get your International A certificate, upgrade again, race, race, race...

It doesn't take long before you're snared: you're completely caught up in the GT

## SEE IT AGAIN SAM

**G**ran Turismo is already famous for the quality of its replays, which are as close as games have ever come to replicating what you might watch on Grandstand. The reflections off the paintwork must be seen to be appreciated, but here's some replays that give some idea of the cool camera angles and the image quality.



[1] The small icons at the bottom left of the screen show the current status of your tyres. [2] Each car has pages of mouth-watering blurbs and tech specs to drool over. [3] Battle of the hatchbacks.

## GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

Gran Turismo contains 166 different cars, from 10 manufacturers. Allow us to take you by the driving-gloved hand and lead around the most expansive

PlayStation showroom there is, pointing out what we believe to be the best and worst on offer from six factories. It's the least we can do.

### Mitsubishi

**Best Car**  
GTO  
Pay around 8,500 for a bottom-of-the-range, unadorned model, and the remarkably cheap upgrades mean you should resist the temptation to trade it in too quickly. Pounds spent on the parts shop will yield some impressive performances.



**Worst Car**  
FTO  
In its favour, cheaper than the GTO but its poor handling and slack performance mean you're far better off saving up for something more impressive. Only the 305,000 credit special edition is even worth a dabble. Otherwise, save your dough.



### Chevrolet

**Best Car**  
CAMARO Z28  
You can get a Chevy that's twice as powerful, but in terms of value for money, the Z28 is the best Chevrolet have to offer at 23,000. It's pretty effective when you're cornering, but a bit sluggish elsewhere. Not a motor you're likely to get excited about.



**Worst Car**  
1996 CORVETTE GRAND SPORT  
Sluggish from the off - get used to seeing competitors zoom past you at the start - and it's tall-happy through corners. Uuugh. Nothing to recommend this one then - a complete non-starter in more ways than one.



### Nissan

**Best Car**  
Skyline  
Ugly, but generally accepted to be the best read car in the world. Its beauty is more than bodywork deep, with truly frightening power and a cunning four wheel drive system that delivers enough power in the right place to stop you spinning.



**Worst Car**  
180 SX  
Reasonable top-end performance, we admit, making it respectable on circuits like High Speed Ring, but embarrassing in anything other than a straight line. Versatility and road handling are foreign concepts to this baby. Steer clear if possible.



### Toyota

**Best Car**  
SUPRA  
Looks good, drives good. The RZ model offers good pounds per horsepower value and just loves corners. Cheaper models also hold their own well. A good all-rounder then, and a solid player in the race that is Gran Turismo - with a face that's not at all ugly.



**Worst Car**  
CELICA  
A real disappointment. Looks the part but fails to live up to its boy racer reputation, with flyaway handling at the top end of the range. All mouth and no trousers, basically. Best to get yourself a lovely new Skyline instead. Oh yes indeed.



### TVR

**Best Car**  
CERBERA LIMITED EDITION  
A stunning motor, this one, but only available by winning the Japanese vs British challenge. Not a bad prize, is it? So, good luck with that test! Inconsiderate test. Worth the effort - a bit of practice should eventually see you right.



**Worst Car**  
CERBERA  
Not an awful car by any means, but the worst of TVR's range, if only because it's the cheapest and least modified. Ugly too, we reckon. And who wants that? Better get some time in on the British vs Japanese challenge and win a cerbera limited edition.



### Chrysler

**Best Car**  
VIPER GTS-R  
Gooch, what can we say? The best paint job in the game graces one of the most powerful cars in the world. Looks the turbo thing that blights some of its top end peers and beautifully balanced for powersliding, if you can keep tabs on the back end.



**Worst Car**  
CONCEPT CAR  
Like the basic TVR Cerbera, Chrysler's concept car is only 'worse' because the small range contains no real dogs. Not really deserving of its title then, but not one to aim for long-term. Something with a little more panache would be good.



# Gran Turismo

1 Reverse the viewing angle for a tick to check what's happening behind. 2 Drivers need to master the brakes. *GT* is a game where you HAVE to use them. 3 The two-player game adds loads to the fun, and the slow-down isn't noticeable. 4 The test track - squeeze as much as you can out of your motor. 5 Take your pick 6 It's as good as it looks.



IT'S ALL SO REAL, SO INVOLVING AND SO COMPLETELY UNLIKE ANY OTHER RACING GAME ON THE PLAYSTATION.

campaign, watching the counter slowly notch up the number of days you've been racing. There are months and months of game play buried in here, starting off racing 180 bhp hatchbacks on a Sunday afternoon and building right up to tearing around convoluted

courses in 1000 brake-horsepower gruntes at more than 200 mph. It's all so real, so involving and so completely unlike any other racing game on the PlayStation or any other platform.

*GT* is a terrific challenge - mastering the driving techniques just to do well with the faster cars could take weeks, and that's even if you're used to real-life motor racing. It does have some minor faults - there's no variety to the weather, and it would be good to have some more European cars - but these don't detract from the plain truth of the matter. *Gran Turismo* is the best racing game, ever. Now that it's only £20 you really don't have any excuses. If you haven't already done so, you should buy a copy the moment you get the chance, play it and play it and wait for *GT2*, by which time you should be more than happy to shell out the full price for some more.

Hang on, Sony are on to something here...  
Paul Pettengale



## SHOCKINGLY GOOD

The Japanese are a lucky bunch. Not only did they get *Gran Turismo* months earlier than us, but also they got the perfect controller to play the thing with. Those souped-up analog pads, called the Dual Shock controllers, were the first decent PlayStation pads to have a force feedback function with variable, or, wobble factor. And, indeed, *Gran Turismo* was the first game written to take advantage of them. Of course, we've all got them now. Haven't we?

Playing *GT* with a Dual Shock pad is fantastic - it really does add an extra level to your enjoyment. The pads kick in

almost from the start, doing their wobbling thing as your car's wheels spin. They get significantly more violent when you collide with another car or, God forbid, a wall. And as you drive over the red and white speed corner bumps, or even the grass, there's enough jiggle between your hands to give you the impression that the car's on the edge of losing its grip, sending you into one of the game's familiar (and frequent) wild spins.



### VERDICT

- GRAPHICS 10
- GAMEPLAY 10
- LIFE SPAN 10

- ORIGINAL RELEASE May 98
- ORIGINAL SCORE 10
- DURABILITY 10

Not only the best PlayStation racing game, but the best racing game bar none. Arguably, in fact, the best game available for PlayStation. So there.

**10**  
OUT OF 10

Official UK PlayStation Platinum Special



PlayStation!



# Colin McRae Rally

If having **some Scots geezer** screaming "Two left. Don't cut. Rocks," in your ear sounds like a drugs reference out of *Trainspotting* to you, then you haven't quite got the hang of rally driving.



**A**ustralia. Deep in the outback. You're driving a souped-up Subaru Impreza doing over 100mph. A cloud of dust plumes out behind you and you've got Colin McRae's co-driver, Nicky Crist, sitting beside you talking you through the course.

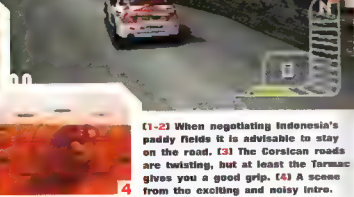
"Two right. Caution. Jump," he shouts, straining to be heard over the engine's incontinent rumble. Just in time you start to translate the coded instructions in your head. That means there's a right-hand bend coming up, it's roughly 30 degrees and that you should be careful because there's a... Woooooaaahhh! ...difficult jump straight after it.

After the car has been righted and put back on the track, and the small crowd of laughing aborigines has dispersed, you take stock of the situation. Luckily you've only lost about four seconds (well, it is a game),

so you leap back in the car and set off again, determined to pay more attention to what Nicky says in future.

*Colin McRae Rally* is a hoot, in places. In other places it's one of the most intensely frustrating, hair-pulling, vicious, vindictive swines of a game you've ever played. But that's simply the difference between screaming through the Australian outback and ploughing through the Swedish snow plains. You see, this is an international game. There are eight parts of the world

EACH COURSE IS EXTREMELY TOUGH AND CHALLENGING, AND THERE ARE VARIED TERRAINS TO LEARN TO DEAL WITH.



[1-2] When negotiating Indonesia's paddy fields it is advisable to stay on the road. [3] The Corsican roads are twisting, but at least the Tarmac gives you a good grip. [4] A scene from the exciting and noisy intro.



PUBLISHER

Codemasters

DEVELOPER

In-house

RELEASE DATE

July 1998

AGE RESTRICTION

None

PRICE

£19.99

STYLE

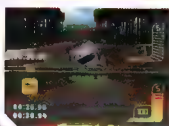
Arcade racer/racing sim

With a choice of four viewing angles, full support for all the different types of controller and a very good split-screen two-player option, *Colin McRae Rally* is a very well-finished package that offers all the choices you should expect from a top-of-the-range PlayStation racing game. More importantly, it's also great fun to play, which is just as well.



to travel to and race your way around (see panel below) and each has its own, and for once very distinctive, atmosphere and challenge.

The game is based around a heavily tweaked version of the graphics engine that powered Codey's *TOCA Touring Car Championship* (turn to page 98), Codey's



IN PLACES IT'S ONE OF THE MOST INTENSELY FRUSTRATING, HAIR-PULLING, VICIOUS SWINES OF A GAME YOU'VE EVER PLAYED.

winning racing game from last year. This is still some people's favourite racing game, however flash *Gran Turismo* may be. It's a good solid racing game with moments of brilliance. The handling is excellent for a start, which is particularly important in simulating a sport where the power slide is the favoured method of turning corners, and the handbrake turn the preferred method of turning tight ones. It also needs to cope with the differences between types of road surface and terrain, from level Tarmac to rough, bumpy wet mud, and this it does superbly.

## TRAVEL THE WORLD, MEET INTERESTING PEOPLE. DRIVE PAST THEM

*Colin McRae Rally* takes you to eight different countries in your quest for the World Championship. Here's a quick rough guide:

### NEW ZEALAND

Population: 3.5 million Capital: Wellington

Roads: Gravel and mud

Common hazards: Walls and trees

Beautiful rolling hills and fairly easy circuits make New Zealand an ideal place for the beginning driver.



### GREECE

Population: 10.3 million Capital: Athens

Roads: Dusty gravel

Common hazards: Potholes and cows

Nightmare mountain goat tracks and stunningly distracting scenery make Greece a bit more of a challenge to tackle.



### MONACO

Population: 0.03 million Capital: Monte Carlo

Roads: Snow and Tarmac

Common hazards: Royalty and yachts

This is where things start to get difficult. Horrible slippery slippy ice conditions and mountain roads make this really tough.



### AUSTRALIA

Population: 7.7 million Capital: Canberra

Roads: Just about

Common hazards: Kangaroos and cricket balls

The most fun by far. Glorious sweeping green roads that fly over humps and jumps. You'll want to go too fast.



### SWEDEN

Population: 8.7 million Capital: Stockholm

Roads: Snow and ice

Common hazards: Gods and elk

Notef, hideous, slippery roads. Get the car to anywhere near a lovely 50 mph and you're off the road.



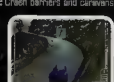
### CORSICA

Population: 0.25 million Capital: Bastia

Roads: Twisty Tarmac

Common hazards: Creak barriers and carvers

Twistier and turnier than a twisty turny hill, Corsica is a real test for the top racer with its fast, all-Tarmac surface.



### INDONESIA

Population: 187.8 million Capital: Djakarta

Roads: Sand and mud

Common hazards: Trees and ex-dictators

Sandy beaches and dense, tropical jungles provide for some of the most varied and exciting racing around.



### ENGLAND

Population: 48.5 million Capital: It is, old boy

Roads: Snow, mud, Tarmac and gravel

Common hazards: Hilarious and ex-Spice Girls

Fittingly, the finale is the toughest of the lot with a huge variety of road surfaces and some very narrow roads.





The graphics are supremely convincing too. Although close inspection reveals that you are in fact racing down a tunnel with scenery-painted walls on either side, at speed the effect is very convincing. Also excellent is the way that terrain reacts to you; the way that water sprays are sometimes kicked up by your tyres, the behaviour of the extremely convincingly light-sourced headlights and the satisfyingly squelchy pools of mud you can fly through.

This is no mindless arcade racer, though. Each course is extremely tough and challenging, and there are very varied terrains to learn to deal with. As well



As you can tell from these images, the backdrop scenery is very good-looking. It's not quite the same as real life, but rather more like driving through a Constable painting. There are lots of excellent little details too, like the splashing water. You can also expect to encounter rain, snow and even a thunder storm as you drive around the world.



THIS IS AN EXCELLENT GAME, THE ONE THAT TAKES THE OFF-ROADER TO THE HEIGHTS OF FUN THAT GRAN TURISMO ACHIEVED.

## WHEELY GREAT

With the increasing variety of PlayStation controllers out there on the market, we thought we'd take a quick look at four of the most popular, and find out which one works best when you're playing *Colin McRae Rally*.

### 1. SONY PLAYSTATION CONTROLLER



Works all right, but is pretty difficult to get precise control with. You'll end up repeatedly dabbling at the D-pad as you try your best to take a racing line on corners.



### 2. SONY ANALOG CONTROLLER WITH DUAL SHOCK



An improvement on the ordinary controller, but there's so little movement available with the thumb joystick that you'll find it extremely difficult to gauge corners properly.



### 3. NAMCO NEGCON



Hard to get used to, but once you've mastered it, the best. There's lots of movement in the twist, so precision cornering is easy. Far superior to the JogCon that comes with *Ridge 4*.



### 4. FANATEC RALLYE



All the advantages of the NegCon for proper hoj racers. This is the best steering wheel available and utilizes two small paddles instead of pedals. Sadly it doesn't rumble.




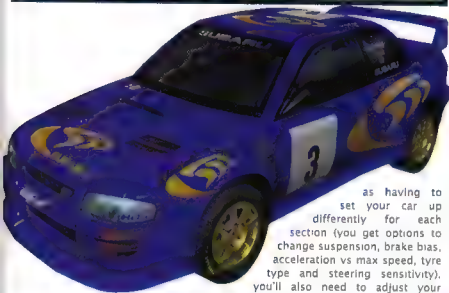


# Colin McRae Rally

**SUPER. SPECIAL. SMASHING.**

Recently introduced to the International Rally Championship, the Super Special stages are a great chance for spectators to see some real head-to-head action.

There are four such stages in *Colin McRae Rally*, one each in Greece, Australia, Corsica and England. If you manage to win a Super Special stage, you'll be allowed access to a new car. The prize for winning in Greece is this lovely Ford Cortina Mk II. And the other prizes? That'd be telling.



as having to set your car up differently for each section (you get options to change suspension, brake bias, acceleration vs max speed, tyre type and steering sensitivity). You'll also need to adjust your driving style to get the fastest times. For example, you learn which terrains encourage you to let the car drift and which require you to fight hard to get the car to corner. You also need to learn to listen *extremely* hard to what your co-driver is saying, rather than assuming you can go it alone. He has the information that will make the difference between racing success and hideous crashes, and learning to interpret his coded instructions is a very real part of the game.

To help you get the most out of your rally car, there is an ingenious rally school for you to attend, with instructions from the maestro himself, Colin McRae. Here you'll be taught how to control the car and how to adapt to various different driving

## VERDICT

|             |   |                    |        |
|-------------|---|--------------------|--------|
| ■ GRAPH_CS  | 9 | ■ ORIGINAL RELEASE | Jul 98 |
| ■ GAMEPLAY  | 9 | ■ ORIGINAL SCORE   | 9      |
| ■ LIFESPAN: | 9 | ■ DURABILITY       | 9      |



**[1-2]** Indonesia offers the greatest variety of racing surfaces. Sand is one of the most difficult in the game. **[3]** Colin McRae himself. Top bloke.

conditions – all vital info for the races ahead.

Colin McRae Rally is an excellent game, the one that finally took the off-road to the dizzying heights of realism and fun that *Gran Turismo* has achieved for the road racer. At its higher levels this is, in fact, a much harder game to play than *Gran Turismo*, and will require all your concentration and wit to defeat it, but then rally driving is just about the hardest type of racing you can do, so that's probably fair. A racer out of the top drawer, now at a rock-bottom price. **Buy**

**Steve Faragher**



Colin's Subaru Impreza is faithfully recreated in the game, along with seven other rally cars.

It may not take the genre to greater heights, but it pushes the boundaries of the off-road racer to somewhere near *Gran Turismo*. Racing fans must buy it.

9

OF 10

# Final Fantasy VII

Yes, it's a videogame, more a way of life. Get into Square's latest and most slice of storytelling and you may find that reality only scores a measly 7/10 by comparison...

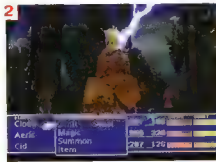


very so often, a game comes along that forces you to reassess your critical standards. A game that, in this case, kept over one hundred hand-picked and head-hunted development staff slaving away for more than two years. A game by Square, one of the most accomplished and understanding software houses in the world. It's a game that the anoraks will try to keep to themselves, but which ordinary challenge-loving PlayStation owners should invade and explore by the steam-driven coachload.

Within half an hour of starting *Final Fantasy VII* you'll see your PlayStation doing things it's never done before. Stuff you probably didn't even know it could do. A mind-melting, jaw-drooping brand of eye-glue that has you collaring innocent passers-by and shouting "Wha..? Would you - look - at - that!"

To help fill you in, take a good long stare at some of our more elaborate screenshots. The general game environment uses those increasingly familiar pre-rendered CGI backdrops which your polygon-described

character can trundle around at will, examining objects and searching for those vital hot spots. The attention to detail is such that, if you're using a SCART lead, your TV seems to take on the resolution of a monitor. **But these locations are far more advanced than anything you've seen in, say, Resident Evil** - instead of static wallpaper, each one is packed with animations and effects. Neon flickers and buzzes; strange machines spin, rumble and whirl; valves hiss plumes of steam; TV screens cycle through adverts or crackle with news broadcasts. Hit a switch and you may suddenly find you've operated a lift, prompting yet another seamless FMV mini-sequence over which the polygon characters remain visible throughout. Disk access? What disk access?



[1] Playing out Cloud's flashback. [2] Not a sensible place to wave a wet stick. [3] After taking repeated hits, unleash your fury in a Limit Break attack. [4] More G-bike scrapping.



PUBLISHER

Sony

DEVELOPER:

Square

RELEASE DATE

October 1997

ORIGIN:

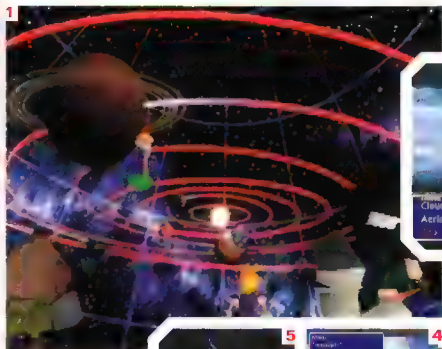
Japan

PRICE

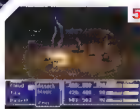
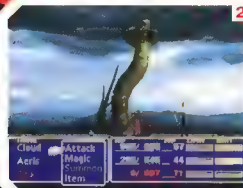
£19.99

STYLE

Role Playing Game



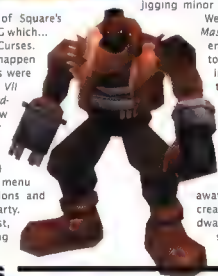
1 Bugenhagen's holographic orrery (cough) juxtaposes FMV with animated polygon folk. 2 'Oh, cobras.' 3 Akira meets Road Rash in this sub-game to protect your three-wheeling buddies from marauding bikers. 4 No, it really is as dodgy as it looks. 5 Group action of a very different nature.



WHEN YOU ENCOUNTER ENEMIES, THE GAME CHANGES MODE TO SHOW A FULLY 3D TEXTURE-MAPPED LOCALE IN WHICH THE CAMERA SPINS AND CIRCLES...

Yet this is just one aspect of Square's Incredible magnum opus, an RPG which...

No, wait, come back! Curses. Should have known that would happen when those three arcane letters were conjoined. Yes, *Final Fantasy VII* is more than just a *Broken Sword*-style adventure with a few puzzles to solve after conversing with bizarre characters. At the heart of the experience is a sophisticated battle engine in which you use menu choices to determine the actions and tactics of your raggle-taggle party. Although it seems simple at first, the discovery of new fighting

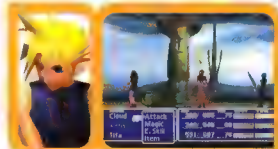


techniques and magical effects gradually adds layer upon layer of complexity to your options. By the end of the game, you'll find yourself spending half an hour just looking over your equipment list and rejigging minor elements for optimum efficiency.

We're light years away from *Dungeon Master*, though. When you encounter enemy forces, the game changes mode to show a fully 3D texture-mapped locale in which the camera spins and circles to show dynamic views of your brave warriors and the curious y'imaginative monsters you must defeat to improve your skills. Every dodge, sword swipe, gunshot and conjuring gesture is graphically portrayed, negating the need for text explanations.

We don't want to give too much away, but when you see some of the creatures (from a bestiary of hundreds) that dwarf your heroes, or the spells that summon titans and demi-gods to your

## HEROES WITH HANG-UPS



Cloud: Once a proud member of the military outfit SOLDIER, now haunted by memories of past events. You'll spend most of Disc 1 guessing just what happened in the Nibelheim Mass Reactor when Sephiroth should have killed him. Cue dream sequences, voices in the head, the flames, the flames...  
Hair by Van de Graf Generator (£89.99)



Aeris: Descended from an ancient race, Aeris wields a mean quarterstaff. But her role complicates the dialogue responses in an unusual way - will Cloud fall for childhood mate Tifa, or the lovely alien flower girl? There's a small echo of Terra from *FFIII* in Yoshinaka Amano's distinctive character design. Accessories by Salesbury's Homebase (£12.50)



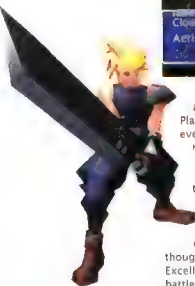
Barret: Is it the enormous physique? Perhaps the absence of a right arm in favour of a bloody great machine gun? Or is it just the uneasy spelling of Barret with ONE 'T' that upsets us and makes us treat this unlikely eco-terrorist with caution? Shoot first, then reload, THEN ask questions, is his pulpit protocol. Manicure by Black & Becker (£34.75)



# PlayStation!



[1] Magic is accessed through the use of Materia - crystals which can summon elemental creatures like the none-too-effete Ifrit [2], grant new abilities, or let you cast spells on enemies in battle [3]. The superb animations for these summonings aren't FMV [4], but the direction is so stunning [5] that you never tire of watching Shiva's ice blast or the Divine Judgement of ol' bearded Ramuh [6].



repetition, and it seems more like laziness than in-joke to re-use samples from previous games like *Final Fantasy III* and *Chrono Trigger*.

If you remember those titles, and consider yourself a Square fan, you were probably waiting for *Final Fantasy VII* with a mixture of eagerness and apprehension. Well, allay your fears. There's a different mood to earlier installments - slicker, more style-conscious, less focussed - and the personal histories aren't quite as involving at first. Give it time. The characters are every bit as detailed and expressive as before, often more so, and you will eventually fall for some of the truly emotive plot twists. In short, you won't be disappointed - far from it.

If this means nothing to you, don't imagine for a second that you'll be missing out by not having played earlier *Final Fantasy* titles, though. Besides the name,

aid, you'll wonder just why nothing else on the Playstation - or a £2000 PC, for that matter - has ever come close. A few shortcuts have been made, however. Square's composers have always treated game music with the importance it deserves, but the *Final Fantasy VII* soundtrack doesn't take up as much of those three discs as you might think. It's so cleverly scored that few players will notice how much of it is actually produced electronically through the sound chip, rather than streamed from CD. That said, though, the sound is the weakest aspect of *FFVII*. Excellent as it is, there just aren't enough different battle themes to avoid the occasional sense of



[1] Even using the new hot-spot highlighter (that green arrow) on SELECT, this looks like a dead end. But climb on to the driver's plate, [2] and you can shut the trains into a position for running across the carriages [3].

## ACTION TIME BATTLE



he strategy battle sequences are in real-time, so you've got to think quick and rattle off those command decisions before they become irrelevant. Should you cure your poisoned comrade now, or cast a protection spell on yourself in anticipation of the next assault? After performing an action, that character then has to wait until their 'ATB' meter fills before they can act again.

With experience, your party becomes more responsive. You can also equip items and cast spells that speed up allies or slow opponents, giving yourself more time to combine attacks or prepare defences.



# Final Fantasy VII

## WALL STREET CRUSH

**A** racking down an old colleague brings you to the Wall Market, a slum district under the protection of small-time game boss Don Corneo. Problem is, he refuses to see anyone except the young ladies who help to cure his insomnia (ahem). If you want an audience, you're going to need a plan - the sort of, leg-shaving, tissue-stuffed plan that's been propping up comedy sub-plots since Shakespeare's day...



### Clothes store

Under the direction of Aeris, you convince an alcoholic tailor to fashion something for the more triangular build. This is just the first step, and helps to get you into the Don's mansion. You also make lots of friends down at the gym, apparently...



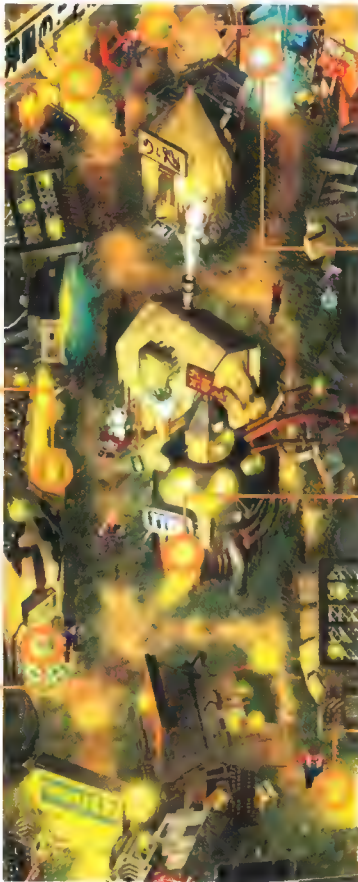
### Sushi bar

Choose well from the menu and you may win a ticket that can be exchanged for cosmetic and beauty products. The more luscious you look, the easier it will be to get into Don Corneo's mansion. Got the idea? Alright, then let's shop!



### Hotel

Every town in *FFVII* will offer you the chance to rest and recuperate those lost hit points, or restore your magical powers with a little meditation. And as you're on a mission to save the world, they can hardly complain about a few missing towels.



### Don Corneo's mansion

Head north to the Don's mansion and the guard is more than simply fooled by your *femme fatale* guise. Reckon you're in, there.



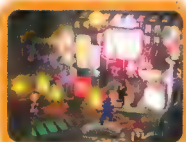
### Gym

One of the bodybuilders has a wig you can borrow - but you're going to have to challenge him before he'll part with it. Remember, the world depends upon you.



### Item shop

At last, a shop that sells items. Run a personal errand for this embarrassed urn merchant.

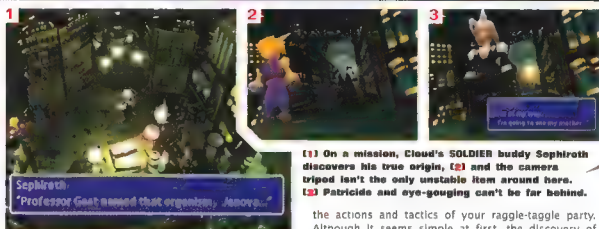


### Wharehouse

When this chap guiltily parts with his pass for the 'Money Bee Inn', you truly get a chance to explore your feminine side. Streuth!

## CHOCOBOS ARE GO!

he words 'cute' and 'ostrich' aren't readily associated most of the time, but look again: one thing you can be sure of in *Final Fantasy* is a safe ride on a Chocobo. The feathered steeds are such a part of the FF mythos that they're rapidly overtaking the poor little Moogle as Square's favourite trademark critter, and even have their own theme tune (this year reworked in a surf guitar style). Head for the Gold Saucer tracks and you can have a flutter on the races, perhaps even become a jockey yourself, if you feel like it. No - did somebody say 'Bernie Clifton'?



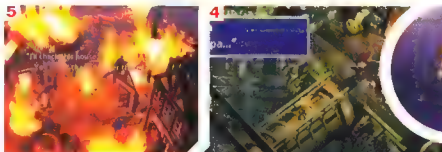
(1) On a mission, Cloud's SOLDIER buddy Sephiroth discovers his true origin, (2) and the camera tripped isn't the only unstable item around here. (3) Patriotic and eye-gouging can't be far behind.

the actions and tactics of your raggle-taggle party. Although it seems simple at first, the discovery of new fighting techniques and magical effects gradually adds layer upon layer of complexity to your options. By the end of the game, you'll find yourself spending half an hour just looking over your equipment list and re-jigging minor elements for optimum efficiency.

We're light years away from *Dungeon Master*, though. When you encounter enemy forces, the game changes mode to show a fully 3D texture-mapped locale in which the camera spins and circles to show

and you may suddenly find you've operated a lift, prompting yet another seamless FMV mini-sequence over which the polygon characters remain visible throughout. Disk access? What disk access? Yet this is just one aspect of Square's incredible magnum opus, an RPG which...

No, wait, come back! Curses. Should have known that would happen when those three arcane letters were conjoined. Yes, *Final Fantasy VII* is more than just a *Broken Sword*-style adventure with a few puzzles to solve after conversing with bizarre characters. At the heart of the experience is a sophisticated battle engine in which you use menu choices to determine



(1) You're about to be tested on your performance of military formations... (2) A trail of blood and dead salarymen in the Shinra office building. (3) 'I'm new in town, and I was wondering where you chaps buy your, er...' (4) The guts of a Mako Reactor. (5) Well, we checked it and, yep, it was on fire all right.



# Final Fantasy VII



[1-3] As you can see, not only does Cloud have an impressive bike, he also knows how to handle it, as any self-respecting hero should. [5] Yes, it's a sub-game, and a particularly impressive one at that. [6] Anybody seen Speed? [7] This looks like trouble. We're not sure why, it just does. [8] Yes, that one. [9] Distant puzzling. [10] Aeris and Tifa politely wait for their turn to hammer the latest beast. [11,12] More agro. [13] That bike game again.

# PLAYERS!

Ah, if you could only edit all the *FFVII* together into one movie. When you appreciate who Sephiroth is, and just what they've done to his closest relatives, you'd understand why he's several pignettes short of a chemist's set. He makes a pretty dashing villain, though. Or is he? OR IS HE? Etc.



dynamic views of your brave warriors and the curiously imaginative monsters you must defeat to improve your skills. Every dodge, sword swipe, gunshot and conjuring gesture is graphically portrayed, negating the need for text explanations.

We don't want to give too much away, but when you see some of the creatures (from a bestiary of hundreds) that dwarf your heroes, or the spells that summon titans and demi-gods to your aid, you'll wonder just why nothing else on the PlayStation – or a £2000 PC, for that matter – has ever come closer. A few shortcuts have been made, however. Square's composers have always treated game music with the

**MANY OF THE SUB-GAMES ARE SO ACCOMPLISHED THAT THEY COMPARE FAVOURABLY TO COMMERCIAL RELEASES. YES, IT REALLY IS THAT IMPRESSIVE.**

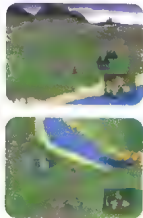
importance it deserves, but the *Final Fantasy VII* soundtrack doesn't take up as much of those three discs as you might think. It's so cleverly scored that few players will notice how much of it is actually produced electronically through the sound chip, rather than streamed from CD. That said, though, the sound is the weakest aspect of *FFVII*. Excellent as it is, there just aren't enough different battle themes to avoid the occasional sense of repetition, and it seems more like laziness than in-joke to re-use samples from previous games like *Final Fantasy III* and *Chrono Trigger*.

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If this means nothing to you, don't imagine for a second that you'll be missing out by not having played earlier *Final Fantasy* titles, though. Besides the name, Square's *Final Fantasy* games are only vaguely linked, in the sense that they



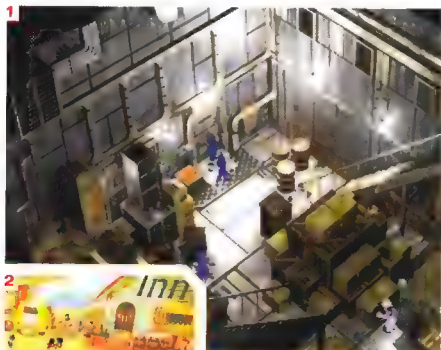
## OH, IT'S ONLY A MODEL



In the innocent days of 16-bit, exploring the world usually meant walking a cutesy sprite across a 2D map of hand-drawn mountains and poorly-scaled castles. And so it comes here – but press a button and *FFVII* suddenly reveals a rotating map of 3D contours, hills and valleys, roads that turn into bridges that span waterfalls. Nothing too ambitious, but remember – this is only the map screen...

### VERDICT

- |            |    |                    |        |
|------------|----|--------------------|--------|
| ■ GRAPHICS | 10 | ■ ORIGINAL RELEASE | Oct 97 |
| ■ GAMEPLAY | 10 | ■ ORIGINAL SCORE   | 10     |
| ■ LIFESPAN | 10 | ■ DURABILITY       | 10     |



Talk about contrasts. One moment you're hunting undead gods (1) in the stark metal hold of a cargo ship... (2) the next, you're looting around a holiday resort from *Lalauri Suit Larry*. Gah.

**Official UK PlayStation Platinum Special**

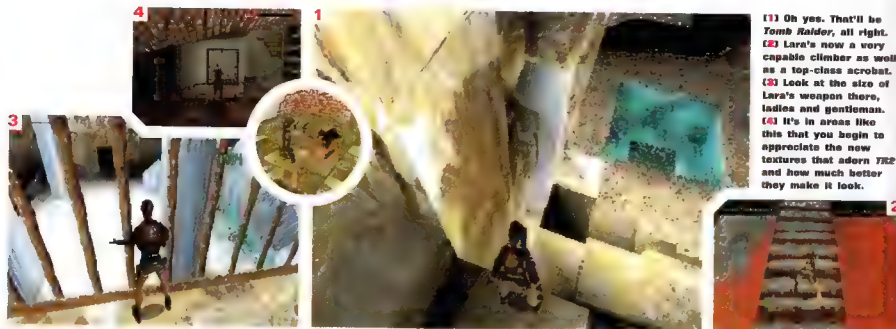
**Final Fantasy VII** set new standards for the PlayStation, standards which still haven't been matched. If you haven't already succumbed, do so now.

**10**  
OUT OF 10

**Calls cost 25p a minute to this number**



# PlayTest



**[1]** Oh yes. That'll be *Tomb Raider*, all right.  
**[2]** Lara's now a very capable climber as well as a top-class acrobat.  
**[3]** Look at the size of Lara's weapon there, ladies and gentlemen.  
**[4]** It's in areas like this that you begin to appreciate the new textures that adorn *TRE* and how much better they make it look.

# Tomb Raider 2

The **second incarnation** of perhaps the **most famous** of all videogames turned out to be **something of a masterpiece...**



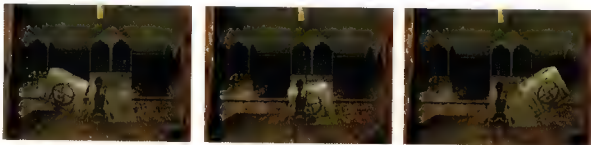
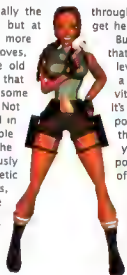
**Y**es, *Tomb Raider 2* was essentially the same game as its predecessor, but at the same time it added so much more to the mix. Take Lara's new moves, for example. As well as all the old jumping, shimmying and running tricks that she used to be able to do, Lara learnt some new stuff in her year off. Like climbing. Not just up to the top of a block as she could in the original, but up ladders and climbable walls, revolutionising the level design in the process. Areas that were previously inaccessible were now open to Lara's athletic inspection. If the level designers were artists, it would be like they'd discovered a whole new colour to paint with. And as we know, the lads at Core were the Michelangelos of level design before.

There were other small improvements to her movement as well. Lara can wade

through shallow water now, meaning that she can get her guns out while still in the water.

But perhaps the biggest single new thing was that Lara could now use vehicles. In the Venice levels, for example, she gets to ride around in a powerboat. Indeed, her ability to do this is vital to being able to complete the level on which it's introduced. The first time Lara climbs into a power boat, guns up the engine and you realise that - rather than some animated sequence - you're actually going to be able to drive the powerboat around, is one of the great moments of *Tomb Raider 2*.

Other significant improvements over the first game include the addition of 'dynamic lighting'. Now that might sound pretty dull, but what it means is that in *Tomb Raider 2*, sources of light can move around, whereas in *Tomb Raider* they were just stuck in one position. The major upshot of this was that



The new moving obstacles make quite a difference to the levels. They also make life a damn sight harder as you attempt to avoid them crushing you. And what's that symbol, eh?



PUBLISHER

Eidos

DEVELOPER:

Core Design

RELEASE DATE:

December 1997

ORIGIN:

UK

PRICE:

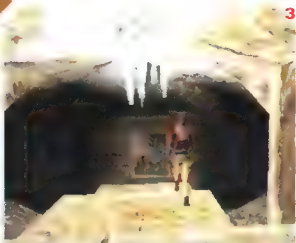
£19.99

STYLE:

3D action adventure



**[1]** Lara scaling previously unreachable heights. **[2]** A more familiar Tomb Raider scene - guns blazing wildly. **[3]** Ms Croft's death defying, high stepping center in full effect. **[4]** The new engine enables lighting effects that actually affect gameplay - like these flares for instance.



indecently crowded. There are thugs with iron bars trying to bash your head in, there are mafioso with automatic weaponry trying to gun you down and - most sinisterly of all, the first time you encounter them - there are frogmen lurking in the water armed with harpoon guns.

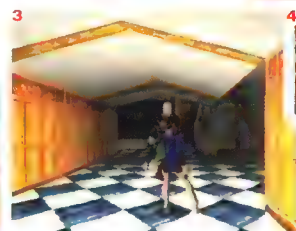
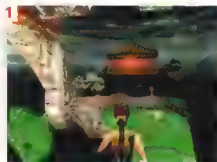
To help her cope with this new array of enemies, Lara has had her weaponry upgraded. In addition to the familiar pistols, automatics and Uzis of the original, TR2 lets you get your hands on some pretty serious firepower, including an M16 combat rifle, a harpoon gun of your own to use underwater and - the ultimate in carnage-wreckers - a grenade launcher.

Tomb Raider 2 is also quite a bit harder than the first game. Which is no bad thing for all us battle-scarred veterans. The first level introduces you to a mind-boggling sequence of trap-doors and crushing rooms that will take all your wits and speed of reaction to overcome. There's a series of rooms that require you to keep moving - and always in the right direction - to avoid certain death. And this is where our only criticism of TR2 comes in.

The first game was, as you will no doubt be aware, a huge success on the PC as well as on the PlayStation. The only significant difference between the two was that while the PlayStation game had a series of save points dotted throughout each level, the PC version allowed you to save the game at any point. Unfortunately, this made the PC

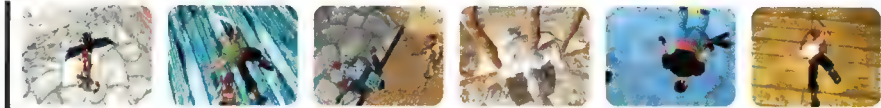


**[1]** Come on then. **[2]** More aimless blazing. Presumably Lara's spotted something in the water.



**[1]** This level is just about as tricky as it gets. **[2]** You're in trouble here. **[3]** As long as you're ready for them most of the goons are easily dispatched. **[4]** Like so.

## EAT MY LEAD



TR2 has a much wider variety of baddies than the original. Now there are flying creatures like the eagle on the left, baddies with iron bars like the second guy along, Tibetan baddies with guns like the guy in snow camouflage, Vets like this one that's been impaled by iron bars (I never touched him, Your Honour), nasty goozers with automatic pistols and, erm, thugs with clubs. But, as you can see, nobody's going to give lovely Lara any real problems...



[1] That's the harpoon gun. And Lara's in her wetsuit. [2] This rusty old hulk is packed with nasty men with guns. So be on your guard.



version much easier to complete than the PlayStation original, and also removed quite a bit of the edge from the gameplay. This was because the PlayStation save points were an integral part of the level design. They were frustratingly well-placed, often stretching your gaming abilities to the absolute limit. They were also the source of a good deal of the game's excitement, as you wondered whether you could nurse a severely injured Lara through enough of the level to find the next save point. On the PC there was none of that excitement; if you wanted to save the game, you just went ahead and did it. Of course, at the same time the PlayStation save points were an artificial element of a game that was so realistic in many other ways: you're not often looking out for a transparent blue diamond in real life. And they were quite possibly viewed by the designers as a necessary evil, given the limited RAM available in the PlayStation's memory and on memory cards.

TOMB RAIDER 2 IS ALSO QUITE A BIT HARDER THAN THE FIRST GAME, WHICH IS NO BAD THING FOR ALL US BATTLE-SCARRED VETERANS

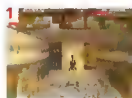


In TR2, though, you can save the game at any point. And - as we've pointed out above - the game is also quite a deal more difficult. While in the first game you often had plenty of time to prepare yourself to make a jump, the second game has many more instances where you're required to act instantly - either because of a moving obstacle that must be avoided, because you've had your weapons confiscated and you're being chased by only open doors for a limited amount of time. So what you do now, of course, is to save the game every time you're in a dangerous position. And if you fail your task, you just reload and try again. And again. And again. Until you succeed.

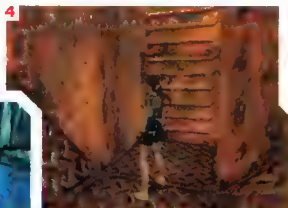
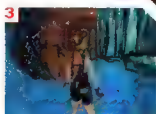
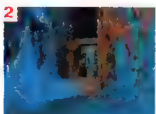
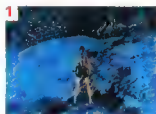
The unfortunate consequence of this is that, rather than making the game feel more realistic by taking out the blue lozenges, TR2 actually loses some of its flow to the continual ghastly interruptions of the loading screen. Luckily this flaw is restricted to only a couple of occasions on each level, so you won't get really frustrated about it. But it's not as good as it used to be. And that's a real shame. Of course, for PC players this won't be such an annoying problem, largely because it should take quite a lot less time to load a level from hard-drive than it does from the CD.

The rest of *Tomb Raider 2* is so good and in so many places such a significant improvement on the original, though, that we shan't be letting this one error of judgement affect our scoring of the game; just don't say that we didn't warn you.

Dan Griffiths



[1] See that explosion? That's the grenade launcher firing, that is. [2] Down, down. Deeper and down.



[1] Some of the levels are almost nightmarish, with the rusty ochre of long-submerged metal clashing horribly with the cool blue of the seafloor. [2] There's a way up just around this corner. There has to be. [3] Lara can fit an awful lot in that tiny little back pack of hers. At the moment it's got five guns, some flares and a couple of artifacts in it. [4,5] Doesn't that look just like Iron?





# Tomb Raider 2

## BABY YOU CAN DRIVE MY CAR

**T**he *Tomb Raider* series not only boasts some of the most demanding and immersive gameplay ever, it also features a main character who has captured the imagination of the public in a way that no Italian plumber or blue hedgehog had before. It gave computer games their first star - Lara Croft.

As *Tomb Raider 2* was launched her image was everywhere you looked; the covers of top style magazines, all over the papers, on-stage with U2, even as a centrefold in *Loaded*.

Lara is Britain's biggest female screen star; she's earned more than Kristin Scott-Thomas in *The English Patient*. She's doing a single with ex-Eurythmics star Dave Stewart. She's earned admiration from gamers and sparked feminist arguments across the newspapers and radio airwaves of the world. She's big news. She's hot.



### THE FACE



### A FAST DRIVE TO FAME

**W**ith her athletic legs, wasp waist and Page Three breasts, she is a digital 'It Girl' who sets male guides racing with her gen-tling antics. But she is also a tough, self-reliant, intelligent woman. Could there be anyone alive who can compare to this feisty virtual being?

Anna Pasternak sings Lara's praises in *The Sunday Times*

### THE GUN GIRL CORRUPTING OUR CHILDREN BY COMPUTER

**I** can imagine boys of 13 skipping homework to grab a few hours with Lara. She is a gun-wielding, saddle-busting sex symbol, whose very large breasts are designed to be out of proportion with the rest of her body.

Dr Ken Parsons misses the point in *The Daily Mail*

### JAMES GOES TOMB TO DOOM

**D**avid James blamed the goals that he let in against Newcastle United on his addiction to games such as *Tomb Raider*. *The Times* blames the lid on David James' videogaming habit

### WITH LARA AT HOME IT'S COOL TO BE A NERD

**L**ara Croft will become a figure of ridicule in 12 months and we'll all be wondering why we were so excited about her. Miles Guttery, editor of *Total PlayStation*, demonstrates his shrewd understanding of the gaming field in *The Independent On Sunday*

### THE BIT GIRL

**Y**ou rarely see her face. Occasionally, the camera angle allows you a glimpse of slanted brown eyes and luscious lips, but otherwise Lara always out ahead, out of reach, like the perfect girl who passes in the street. Style guru Miranda Sawyer comes over all poetical in the posour's favourite magazine, *THE FACE*

### SNIPPETS

**L**ara's popularity comes down to two words, and the second one is "jugs". Occasional PSM reviewer Stuart Campbell tells *THE FACE* what he reckons

**T**omb Raider itself and the way you control the character is innovative, intelligent and modern, but the character you control is a '70s throwback from the days when posturing lovelies were always to be found propped up against any consumer icon advertised for men. Violet Berlin explains why she prefers manga babes on Radio 5's *The Big Sky*

VERDICT

10

10

9

Dec 97

10

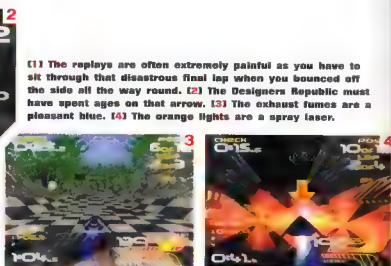
9

Nobody really believed that *Tomb Raider 2* would be able to top *Tomb Raider 1*. How wrong they were, and now it's yours for £20!

10

OUT OF 10

Official PS1  
**PlayStation**  
Platinum Special Edition  
GRAPHICS  
GAMEPLAY  
LIFESPAN



[1] The replays are often extremely painful as you have to sit through that disastrous final lap when you bounced off the side all the way round. [2] The Designers Republic must have spent ages on that arrow. [3] The exhaust fumes are a pleasant blue. [4] The orange lights are a spray laser.

# Wipeout 2097

What must it be like to drive a spaceship with rockets and things along underground passageways? Here's a game that lets you find out...



**T**he original *Wipeout* sold a significant number of PlayStations, to say the very least. As well as establishing the console's technical merits, Psygnosis' club savvy product was amongst the first to make the PlayStation in any way cool. Now, several years on, it remains one of the most important titles on the machine (with *Wipeout 3* just being announced to a highly-excitable young audience), and for Psygnosis, one of their biggest-selling titles.

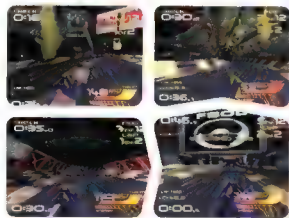
Why is it one of the most important PlayStation titles? Simply because it illustrated perfectly the graphical power of the console and the 3D capabilities therein. The engine remains superb, so much so that the writers didn't need to consider updating it or, indeed, creating a new number. They could concentrate on improving the gameplay, taking on board critical feedback from the original and polishing off the visuals to a shine.

At this juncture, it might be prudent to point out exactly what *Wipeout* is and was. The original was released nearly four years ago and many of you have clambered aboard in the intervening months. *Wipeout* is a futuristic racing game with an array of undulating circuits upon which *Star Wars*-style hovey craft bash along à toute vitesse. The ships actually bob on air a few feet above the track and en route you can pick up missiles, rockets and other death-related things. You

THE SHIPS ACTUALLY BOB ON AIR A FEW FEET ABOVE THE TRACK AND EN ROUTE YOU CAN PICK UP MISSILES, ROCKETS AND OTHER DEATH-RELATED THINGS.

## TALON'S REACH

**T**his circuit will be your first port of call. It's set in a 'major Canadian industrial complex' and it's quite an easy course to learn and probably the best to fly in two-player link mode. Not once will you have to touch on the air brakes and you can reach some ridiculous speeds.



## SAGAMATHA

**A** rather classic from the earliest of the three classes, Victor. This one's set in the snow-capped Tibetan mountains. Again, it's simple enough to learn and although you may need to squeeze the brakes now and again, victory should be a formality after a couple of try-outs.





PUBLISHER:

Psychosis

DEVELOPER:

In-house

RELEASE DATE:

October 1996

ORIGIN:

UK

PRICE:

£19.99

STYLE:

Futuristic racing



[1] The automatic pilot power-up should move you up a couple of places. [2] Link mode and you're losing. Hit the right speed-up patches and you'll soon be alongside. [3] The two yellow arrows denote a massive speed-up. Don't use it on a bend. [4] Race over. [5] A sponsor. [6] A vehicle recovery ship. [7] The thin blue line. [8] Your scrbe has the fastest lap. [9] The pits restore your energy. [10] 230KPH and some serious air. [11] A minor explosion.



# Playtest!



Red Bull (the 'refreshing energy drink') travelled the country's better nightclubs with *Wipeout 2097*. Technotronic beat meets caffeine and space.

oscillate wildly through corners of varying degrees of difficulty. Terribly hard, and often frustrating. But jolly fun, all the same – the sheer speed of the thing is immense, reminiscent of the immersing motion rides in leisure theme parks.

We played this sequel, *Wipeout 2097*, an awful lot, so perhaps it's time to share with you a selection of comments from artists, writers and a rabble of nangers-on that just happened to be passing when we were reviewing this game – try to work out which ones are still relevant today. 'This game has finally convinced me that a two-player PlayStation link is a Good Thing.' 'Wipeout 2097 is the first time I've genuinely enjoyed playing a game!'. Wel, ghast me flabbers and the hoist the mainstay, Cap'n. Someone's really pushing the boat out. It's bloody brilliant. The two-player game is the most addictive thing ever! No, don't sit on the fence. It feels slicker than the first one, but the link-up mode is what really makes it. Okay, I've never played because I can't get near the machine.' Shucks. Sorry.

You may have garnered that we played *Wipeout 2097* on the two-player link-up quite a bit. 'Ah but,' we hear you cry, 'you've got two copies of the game, two PlayStation, two telies and a link cable. This isn't



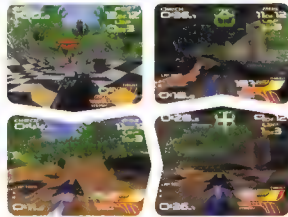
relevant for most of us.' Sure. But believe us, we see a lot of games on many a platform and rarely has the imagination been caught, hooked, lined and sunk as it has with *Wipeout 2097* adjoined to a brace of consoles.

The link mode on the original was a poor affair, what with the narrow width of the circuits, the way that your ship ground to a shuddering halt as soon as you hit the sides, and the fact that if your opponent was even slightly better, you'd see neither sight nor sign of him after the first bend. Not so here. All the new circuits are greater in girth, and if you catch the sides you can scrape along the edge. The power-ups are more varied and because the courses give you more leeway, you can concentrate on using them to best

(1) You can tell we've played this on link for an age. You're better off with the slower, more manoeuvrable ships on the trickier circuits at first.

(2) Enormous, dark tunnels are an impressive new feature. We like them.

## VALPASISSO



**W**elcome to the jungle. After you've completed the easier Vector circuits it's time to test your mettle on the Venom section. The first of these is set in a South American jungle and you'll find the surface considerably more undulating and the bends will be far more severe.

## PHENITIA PARK

**T**he second of the Venom courses sees you in a newly-constructed German commercial park. Clearly the designers have thought long and hard on the best way to improve the circuits from the original, and in making the tracks wider have ensured that fewer fits of rage will happen.



WE SEE A LOT OF GAMES ON MANY A PLATFORM AND RARELY HAS THE IMAGINATION BEEN CAUGHT, HOOKED, LINED AND SUNK AS WITH *WIPEOUT 2097*.

## DESIGNERS REPUBLIC

**A**s in the original, Designers Republic were drafted in to sort out the logos, and they look as stylish as ever. We're not sure about that arrow in the link mode, mind.



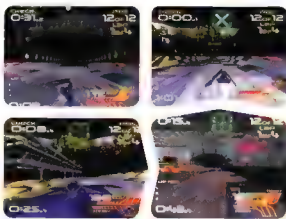
# Wipeout 2097



The rendered introduction is an impressive affair, without labouring the point to distraction. Neat, clean and just the right length. Publishers take note.

## GARE D'EUROPA

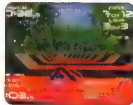
**T**ime to sort the men from the boys. Or the women from the girls. Or something. This course is in a disused French metro. Not only are there some twisty turns from hell, you also have to cope with some of the darkest tunnels since *Doom*. Keep your hands on those air brakes.



## ODESSA KEYS



**T**he final 'normal' course is another devil to tackle. Odessa Keys is the ultimate futuristic circuit suspended high above the Black Sea... naturally. Like Gare D'Europa, some of the course is virtually pitch black, so eyes down, keep your fingers twitching and watch it.



effect. Having after your opponent, knowing you've got a missile ready to enter the fray, is most gratifying. Actually we can say that *Wipeout 2097* is The Best Link Game for the little grey chap. On the easiest course, Talon's Reach (set in 'a major Canadian industrial complex', after about half an hour you can pretty much learn where every power-up is and how to take the best racing line. THIS COURSE HAS TAKEN THREE DAYS OF OUR LIVES; it's taken the 'just one more go' syndrome to dangerous extremes.

George Harrison once remarked, 'You wouldn't fiddle with the basic rugged concept of my personality, would you madam?'. The basic rugged concept of *Wipeout's* personality has not been fiddled with. Back for more are the Designers Republic with their dinky iconography - visually it's pretty much the same, only the gameplay is better. The structure and difficulty progression ensure that the novice won't have much



trouble emerging victorious on the two easy courses (no air brakes required), you'll get the measure of the proceeding brace (a gentle squeeze on the brakes now and then), while the Rapiet class (siam the anchors on repeatedly) is darned tough. If you

complete six courses, you get to race two further circuits. And if you win those you bash through all eight again, only this time the pace ups considerably. Frighteningly. Emerge victorious and you do battle with the secret Phantom team who depart like something off of a shovel.

Choons: Future Sound of London, Fluke, The Chemical Brothers, Photek, Underworld, The Prodigy and Cold StRaGE. *Firestarter*, by The Prodigy, is a 'banging tune' which 'larges' it big style and the rest sleep along pleasantly. Back to the game.

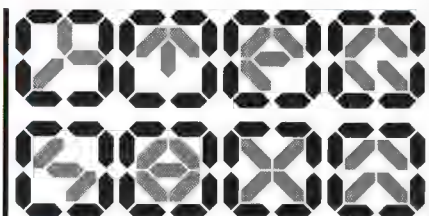
The ships take damage, so if you get blasted by missiles, thundered by bombs and electro-bolted, you can replenish energy in two ways: either by hurtling over the correct pick-ups, or by whooshing through the pit lane and out the other side. If you keep control



[1] This tunnel is called Potemkin. Possibly after the famous Eisenstein seminal film, *Battleship Potemkin*. Russian it was. [2] The pits. Again. If you've got an 'auto pilot' power-up, don't use it near the pits because it automatically sends you straight in. [3] Undulating surface.

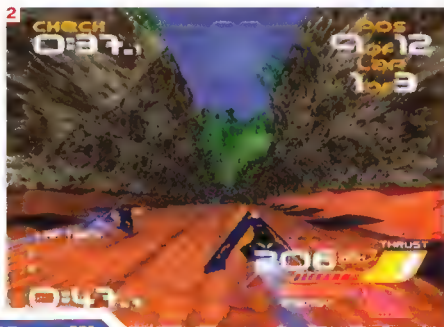
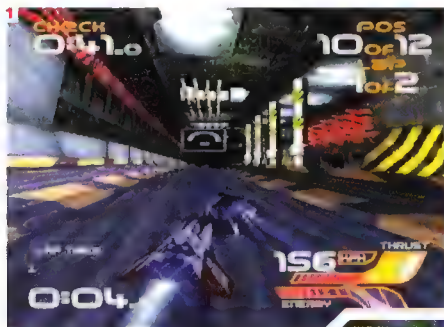


## POWER TO THE PEOPLE



**A** The pick-ups in 2097 were structured so as to make them more important to collect. This is especially relevant to the link game when a quick speed burst can make the difference between victory and defeat. Our favourite is the Quake Disruptor. Care, do you?

# PlayTest



(1) As beautiful as a Constable painting, don't you agree? (2) TAKE 'EM QUICK! (3) I'd watch out for the missiles if I were you. (4) At least you don't completely lose it any more when you hit the barriers. (5) Take the racing line for this chicane. (6) Ah... (7) I do like those blue traces. (8) Oh good, here's some more. (9) There's even guided missiles. (10) Bet you can't wait for *Wipeout 3*, eh? (11) ...I know I can't. (12) Thankfully, clipping isn't really a problem.



# Wipeout 2097

- (1) It is possible to go the wrong way. You just turn around and go back the way you came.  
(2) Always go carefully when you approach pedestrian crossings.  
(3) It's much easier to see the ships ahead of you now that they sport a blue trail. (4) Play the link. PLAY THE LINK.



of the craft you should be able to negotiate the pits without losing too much time. Care must be taken when activating the Autopilot power-up, though – if you're anywhere near the pits, it'll take you in regardless of your condition and when it disengages, you almost always bash into the nearest wall. Oh, and while we're talking about the pick-ups, there's one called the Quake Disruptor which sends a huge power ripple along the track destroying everything in its wake. We like this.

What's remarkable about *Wipeout 2097*, though, is that most saw this (and its predecessor) as little more than graphical demos. These are the sort of leathery creatures who only ever saw the game over somebody's shoulder. Playing the game, as anyone who has done to a suitable degree will be able to tell you, is a fantastic speedball of a ride through a range of the senses and is a powerful and addictive experience.

It's been on Platinum a while now, selling incredibly well for all the right reasons. Like *Resident Evil*, *F1 97*,

LIKE *RESIDENT EVIL*, *F1 97*, *DESTRUCTION DERBY 2* AND *MICRO MACHINES V3*, *WIPEOUT 2097* IS A WONDERFUL GAME THAT'S AGED BEAUTIFULLY.

*Destruction Derby 2* and *Micro Machines V3*. It's a wonderful game that's aged beautifully.

Those who couldn't get to grips with the original will find its successor far more accessible. As a two-player game it has to score a maximum 10, it's THAT great. For the lonesome pilot, it's far less frustrating – you certainly won't throw the joypad at the screen as often. And so, after much deliberation, the jury has settled on nine.

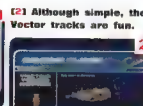
Daniel Griffiths



## WHAT'S ON THE MENU?



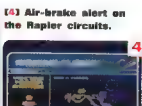
- (1) A very trendy menu screen. Recently.



- (2) Although simple, the Vector tracks are fun.



- (3) Slightly tougher are the Venom circuits.



- (4) Air-brake alert on the Rapier circuits.



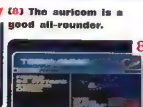
- (5) Dark, exotic, but with some sharp turns.



- (6) Can you improve on your fastest lap?



- (7) Fine acceleration. Shame about the colour.



- (8) The curlicorn is a good all-rounder.



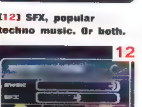
- (9) The fastest ship of them all. It's grand.



- (10) Quite slow but most manoeuvrable.



- (11) Configure the controls, why not?



- (12) SFX, popular techno music. Or both.

### VERDICT

- GRAPHICS
- GAMEPLAY
- LIFESPAN

- ORIGINAL RELEASE
- ORIGINAL SCORE
- DURABILITY

- Oct 96
- 9
- 9

Well, it's not bad is it? Although *Wipeout* 3's just around the corner, there's still plenty in this game to recommend a closer inspection.

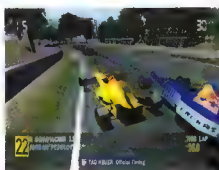
9  
OUT OF 10

Official UK PlayStation Platinum Special

Playtest!

# Formula 1 '97

The sequel to the **best-selling** game of 1996 arrived with an impressive screech... But did it get the pole... or crash and burn?



All of these shots are from the game itself. The cars are made up of nearly 1,200 polygons each, as compared to F1's 700 or so. They even look better than F1 '96's. Combine that with the high-resolution graphics, improved lighting, and tweaked shading, and this is the stunning result.



**F** or all its minor faults and the annoying bugs, 1996's *Formula One* was still an incredibly good racing game, even on a machine like the PlayStation, which is hardly lacking for choice in the genre. It's not surprising, then, that the sequel became one of the most eagerly awaited games in the machine's short but illustrious history as soon as it was announced. As the programming progressed developers Bizarre Creations seemed set on producing the ultimate Grand Prix game, and what's more, they seemed capable of doing it.

Luckily then, it was everything that any PlayStation owner could have hoped for – if not more.

The first thing you have to realise about F1 '97 is that this is no mere update. Bizarre weren't content to simply spice up the graphics, change the names to reflect the then-current season, and throw the result in a nice shiny new

**F1 '97** was a completely new racing game, rewritten from the ground up and superior to its predecessor in almost every regard.

box. F1 '97 was still a Formula One racing game, but it was a completely new one, rewritten from the ground up and superior to its predecessor in almost every regard. Or rather, it was two completely new games. One is a pure arcade racer – fast, forgiving, simple to pick up, challenging to master, great fun, and horribly addictive. The other is a full-on sim – accurate, realistic, complex, absorbing, and more challenging, but just as much fun and equally addictive.





PUBLISHER:

Psychosis

DEVELOPER

Bizarre Creations

RELEASE DATE:

September 1997

ORIGIN:

UK

PRICE:

£19.99

STYLE

Arcade racer/racing sim



The increased detail is most apparent in Grand Prix mode. All of the cars are deformable... and stray bits of debris stay on the track.

So different are the Arcade and Grand Prix modes, in fact, that they almost deserve reviews of their own. But they do share one important thing: the graphics engine. And what an engine. If we thought that the original *F1* looked great – and let's face it, it did – we were stunned by the quality visuals of its sequel!

Perhaps the most obvious and most important change was to the resolution. The whole game runs in 512 x 256 high resolution throughout, giving the whole game a crisper and clearer look. Bizarre didn't stop there, though. They also took full advantage of the increased detail afforded by the higher resolution, and both the newly-updated and re-modelled tracks and the cars were even closer to the real thing. On many of the courses even the trees are in the right places, and the cars are made up of 1,200 polygons each, as opposed to the original's 700 or so.

Similarly, all the various effects were improved, with transparent smoke, dust, and sand effects, and a much improved weather system that features actual rain and slowly increasing water on the tracks.

Nowhere is this increased detail more apparent than

(1,2) The head-to-head, split-screen mode is a joy to play, and gives you the choice of horizontal or vertical splits. (3) Unlike *F1*, in *F1 '97* the cars can actually leave the surface of the road, allowing for spectacular crashes and collisions. (4) The racing line is still indicated by the clever use of tyre marks on the track in the Grand Prix Mode, a neat feature.

in the Grand Prix mode with some of the options turned on. All of the cars are fully deformable, getting crumpled up in the areas hit when colliding, suffering from bent or broken off wings, and being able to lose whole wheels. The bits that fly off of a damaged car also stay on the track, presenting obstacles to other drivers and damaging cars that hit them in turn. Switch on Failures and you open yourself up to engine fires, oil leaks and whole range of other problems, all of which are gorgeously presented on screen.

There are also more views available – a full eight perspectives on the action in Grand Prix mode, including an in-the-cockpit view, complete with steering wheel

## MURRAY POLE



The good news for Murray Walker fans is that he was handed even more lines in *F1 '97*. But what did he actually think of the game?

### How much have you seen of the game?

I own a copy of the original, although I never really have time to play it. One thing I was curious to find out was how the commentary worked. Having not been involved in a computer game before, I didn't know how they would implement the commentary into the finished game. I think what surprised me the most was *F1*'s success.

### How did you get involved in the original *F1*?

I was contacted by Psychosis directly. They arranged for me to visit Bizarre Creations and look at the game under development. I was very impressed with the set-up and was only too glad to become involved.

### What about the new game, then?

The sequel appears to be even more impressive. With the '97 licence and the inclusion of all the new teams, drivers and

tracks, it can only help to benefit the sport as a whole.

### Do you play many computer games? If so, which ones are your favourites?

I think I may be getting a bit too old to start playing computer games, but certainly everyone I've spoken to who has played the original game was very impressed with it.

### What about the future?

I have signed an exclusive agreement with Psychosis which means I'll be doing the commentary for their *Formula 1* series for the next two years. And as I said earlier, with the new '97 licence and all the new features, this should keep the most ardent *F1* fan happy. I'm looking forward to working with them on future projects. It'll be interesting to see how they cope with the numerous changes in the fast-paced world of Formula One.



*F1 '97* supports both the NeoCon and Sony's analogue pad. For Arcade mode, we prefer the normal pad. Grand Prix, though, really requires an analogue controller of some kind.



## THE GRAND PRIX MODE

**A**lthough the Arcade game is strong enough to stand on its own, the heart of *F1 97* is undoubtedly the Grand Prix mode. This is where things get really impressive.

With *F1* Bizarre were concerned about making the game too 'slimpy' – *F1* cars are far from easy to drive, after all – and so toned down the realism in an effort to make things playable. The massive response to the game, though, convinced them that as gamers were more than up to the challenge. As such, *F1 97*'s Grand Prix mode is far more complex and challenging than the first game.

It's also more absorbing, with greater depth to the gameplay and a longer lifespan – mastering *F1 97* will take weeks or months. It all comes down to the increased levels of detail, redesigned physics model, and improved AI.

While the first game gave you a fair degree of control over your car set-up, *F1 97* takes the PlayStation to new levels of authenticity and control. Before each race you can select from an incredible range of options, fine-tuning both the difficulty and realism to your tastes, completely setting up your car.

The general options allow you to choose the race length; skill level (there are five); steering assist; braking assist; which sessions to complete (practice, qualify and race, qualify and race, or just race); damage; failures; weather (more on this later); tyre wear; fuel depletion; tear offs; and flags (penalties for dangerous driving, and warnings of hazards). The car set-up then gives you control over almost every part of the car

– gears, tyres, tyre compound, suspension, brake discs, brake bias, front and rear downforce, and fuel load.

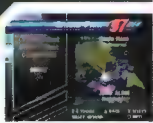
All of these options work hand in hand with the physics of the cars and racing conditions, making this a more advanced and more demanding game to master but one that has far more subtlety and scope. Each wheel's level of traction and braking is calculated individually, taking into consideration the tyre compound, level of wear, weather, and track condition. Steering is affected by the centre of gravity and momentum of the

car. Likewise the weather system has been improved, allowing for rain to come and go during the race, and for conditions to worsen.

Finally comes the AI used to control the other drivers. In *F1*, all the drivers were controlled by the same basic AI, which tended to ignore the player in favour of the racing line, and always drove infallibly – left to their own devices the computer cars would always finish, and normally in about the same order. In *F1 97* the basic AI engine has been expanded, allowing for more realistic and aggressive driving behaviour, and each individual driver is rated in a number of areas of skill, giving each computer car its own personality. Further, the AI also incorporates a random element, which means that the computer cars not only drive to win, but also run the risk of overcooking things somewhat. Collisions, skids, spin-outs, and more, are all possible, and with damage and failures turned on, the AI cars can put themselves out of the race, just like in real life, and for the sake of you.



The Benetton-Renault remained an impressive car, and is one of the best choices for *F1 97*'s Arcade mode, being superbly balanced.



As if just driving wasn't hard enough, you can turn on failures – resulting in scenes like these, if you're unlucky.



and hands that turn to match your actions. Turn on Tear Offs and this view even slowly degrades in quality as dust, grit and oil accumulate on your visor until your driver uses a tear-off strip, cleaning it.

Amazingly, though, *F1 97*'s graphics are just as fast or faster than the original's low-res engine. *F1 97* runs at 25 frames per second on our annoyingly slow PAL machines, and managing a steady 30 fps on NTSC systems, even when there are a dozen or more cars on the screen.

Part of this is due to the cunning routines used, part is due to the extra time that Bizarre had to produce this sequel, and part is down to a particularly clever dynamic drawing routine. While *F1* simply drew everything all of the time, resuming in slow-down and the odd jump when things got busy on the screen, *F1 97* works out how much it can draw and maintain the frame rate. It starts with the most important stuff – the track and the cars – and then draws as much of the background as it can in the time it has, before moving on to the next frame. In practice this is hardly noticable when you're actually playing, and even spectators can find it hard to spot. And even if it does bother you, there's the option to turn it on or off to suit your tastes.

Backing up this visual splendour is the sound, which has also been vastly improved. Whereas the original game had two engine noises – one inside the car, and one outside – *F1 97* uses multiple samples recorded at different positions in and around a variety of the different cars. These are then combined to give each team's car its own distinct sound, which even varies depending on your current view.

Then, of course, there's the music – 12 completely new CD-quality tracks, split into Arcade and Grand Prix style. The former are dancey and upbeat, while the latter are more guitar and orchestral in style. The sound controls allow you to pick which tracks you want to hear in any given race.

Finally comes the commentary – one of the most outstanding and immensely popular aspects of the original game, and another area that's been improved. There's now three times as much speech, featuring the return of the inimitable Murray Walker and also his new sidekick, Martin Brundle. Murray continues



# Formula 1 '97

## THE ARCADE MODE

**T**his is just what it says: a pure arcade game with no pretence at being realistic, but every intention of being as playable as possible. All the courses are split into four difficulty levels—Easy, Medium, Hard, and Extreme. At the start of a new game you can choose the beginning circuit on any of the first three levels. You then select your team. Each team's cars are rated in four areas—Acceleration, Top Speed, Grip, and Braking—using simply bars to indicate their relative strengths and weakness, and allowing you to choose one that's best suited to the course in question. Then you choose between manual and automatic gearing, and you're into the race. In Arcade mode you always start at the back of the grid, and there's a time limit for each race. You must not only finish but do so in the points in order to progress to the next track of that difficulty

level. Gaining access to the Easy, Medium, and Hard courses then allows you to choose the Extreme difficulty level. Along the way there are a number of bonus tracks and other secrets that become accessible if you do particularly well—finishing first in every race, for example.

The cars in Arcade mode handle with great ease, and even running on to the grass or gravel pits doesn't cause you too many problems. It takes only a couple of laps to get to grips with the controls, and before you know it, you're powersliding around bends and screaming up through the pack. There's no damage, fuel, or anything else to worry about—just winning the race.

Deceptively simple though it may seem at first, however, the difficulty levels have been very finely tuned and as you progress you find yourself developing more and more skill.



ArCADE mode is very forgiving—stacks like this are no more than a temporary inconvenience...

to scream out the most ridiculous comments throughout, while Brundle tends to stick more to the facts—they play off of each other brilliantly. There's also an optional, over-the-top 'American style' commentator for the Arcade mode, who's either amusing or annoying depending on your tastes, and the Grand Prix mode features pit radio. As you race, your pit crew keep in touch, letting you know about

the state of your car and fuel load, advising you when to come into the pits, and so on. It all adds up to an incredibly atmospheric and involving experience.

As ever, though, it's not the graphics and the sound that make a great game; it's how it plays, and this is where we come back to the two very distinct game modes. Whereas F1's Arcade mode was nothing more than a slightly more forgiving version of the Grand Prix mode, F1 '97 really is two games in one—and they couldn't be more different in style and approach.

If you're still not convinced then consider the sobering fact that all of the series featured in this magazine, the F1 family is unique. The Platinum edition is easily superior to its full priced sequel. Yes, F1 '98 developed by a different team in a massive hurry after Bizarre Creations demurred, stalled embarrassingly, failing to perform in any of the key areas.

It's not a question of weighing the quality of each subsequent Formula 1 game against its price, then. In this case, Formula 1 '97 is the only sensible choice, half-price or otherwise.

Dan Griffiths



F1 '97's graphics engine is faster than the original, running at 25fps, even with a dozen or more cars on the screen.



The new and improved weather effects are just as impressive as the rest of the game, allowing for waterlogged sections, and changes in conditions. Likewise, the computer drivers now react to the weather and slow down.

### VERDICT

|            |   |                    |   |
|------------|---|--------------------|---|
| ■ GRAPHICS | 9 | ■ ORIGINAL RELEASE | 9 |
| ■ GAMEPLAY | 9 | ■ ORIGINAL SCORE   | 9 |
| ■ JIFESPAN | 9 | ■ DURABILITY       | 9 |

PlayStation Platinum Special

Better than either F1 or F1 '96, '97 is the best Grand Prix game on PlayStation. In the words of Murray, 'WE'VE GOT REAL EXCITEMENT COMING UP NOW!'

9



(1) Jump, Crash! He does a lot of this. (2) Crash appears in the first warp room in overly dramatic fashion. (3) One of the bonus sections. Goodies aplenty here. (4) These nasty purple birds are a pain in the ha... handicut. (5) Oops. Dead again.

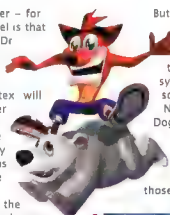
# Crash Bandicoot 2

**Crash is back! But is this a genuine attempt to further the character's career, or just a cash-in quick exercise before has-been-dom beckons for the bandicoot?**



**T**he excuse – er, scenario, rather – for this first *Crash Bandicoot* sequel is that Crash's Nemesis, the twisted Dr Neo Cortex, has deceived Crash into collecting crystals which are needed to protect the earth from impending doom – though Cortex will actually use them to power a special master crystal capable of destroying the earth blah blah... whatever. The simple fact is that Crash has to make his way through 25 levels (not counting the various bosses and secret bits), picking up the pointy purple gems in each level.

CB2 has one major enhancement over the original game, in that – as you probably know – *Crash Bandicoot* had the most perverse and frustrating save game system. You had to collect three tokens to be able to enter a bonus round, and only after this were you allowed to save your position. Which means that if, in the heat of the action, you missed a token, you could die and have to replay that level.



But not just that one, oh no. You might also be sent back to the start of the level before that. And considering the treacherous going in some of the later stages, this needlessly complex system made *Crash Bandicoot* just ever so slightly bloody annoying.

Not so the sequel: Developer Naughty Dog has kept things nice and simple by allowing Crash to enter any one of five stages from a central warp room; after each stage you can save the game (memory card only), and you can play those five levels in any order until they've

**CORTEX WILL ACTUALLY USE CRYSTALS TO POWER A SPECIAL MASTER CRYSTAL CAPABLE OF DESTROYING THE EARTH BLAH BLAH BLAH... WHATEVER.**



One of the bear-riding sections: (1) YIKES! It's Shamu the killer whale. (2) And watch out for, erm, totem poles.





PUBLISHER:

Sony

DEVELOPER

Naughty Dog

RELEASE DATE:

November 1997

AGE RESTRICTION

None

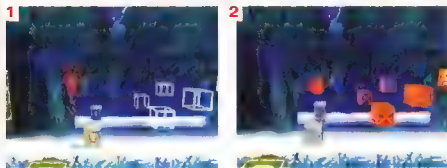
PRICE:

£19.99

STYLE

2.5D Platformer

[1] In one of the slippy ice levels you get those invisible block things.  
[2] But a quick bounce on the 15 block turns them all into wooden packing cases. Be careful, though – they disintegrate when our Crashy jumps on 'em.



all been successfully de-gemmed. Ahh... thank you, Naughty Dog.

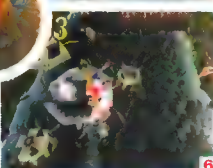
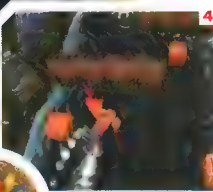
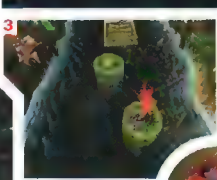
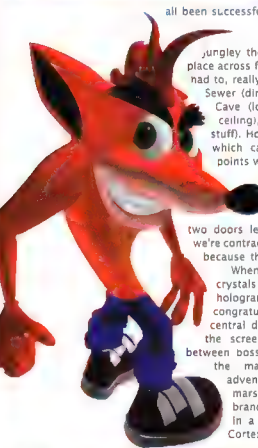
Instead of the incessantly jungle theme of the first game, CB2 takes place across five themed areas: Jungle (well they had to, really); Glacial (slippy-slidey ice levels); Sewer (dimly-lit tunnels with murky water); Cave (lots of hanging around from the ceiling); and Space (robots, jetpacks and stuff). However, there is a sixth warp room which can be accessed from five secret points which are secreted (naturally) about the game. Once inside this new warp room, three of the doors lead back to secret sections of previous levels, while the final two doors lead to totally new levels – which we're contractually obliged not to tell you about because they're just too secret.

When you've collected all the purple crystals from your five stages, Dr Cortex's hologram appears to offer his congratulations; you then climb on to the central dais which revolves up and out of the screen, transporting Crash to an in-between boss section. Here we meet some of the mad adversaries from his first adventures – such as the mad incendiary marsupial, R. Papper Roo – plus one or two brand new heavies (ahem), culminating in a one-on-one with the dreaded Dr. Cortex himself.

## THE ADDITION OF SECRET CRYSTALS OF DIFFERING COLOURS PROVIDED A SECONDARY CHALLENGE FOR THE SEASONED PLATFORMER.

During the course of each level there are also bonus sections which are a direct descendant of those seen in the original. Again, the idea is to collect the goodies (bonus apples, protect ve witch doctor masks, extra bandicoot lives) and make it to the end intact. These are slightly more puzzley than before and rapidly become tough to complete. Thank heavens they're a bit easier to find this time round (they're usually clearly marked in the centre of a clearing – you can't miss 'em).

Another new addition was the secret crystals of differing colours which provide a secondary challenge for the seasoned platformer. Or anyone wanting to eke out those last, vital drops of gameplay before



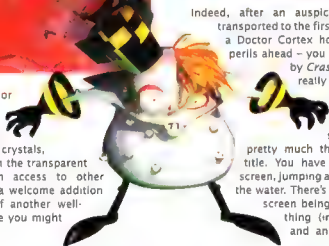
[1] Crash warps into a new room leading to five new levels. [2] One of the crystals you must collect. [3] These solid-looking platforms move from side to side – the swimmers. [4] Crash on his little jet-powered surfboard thing. [5] Crash jumping over fences in his little jet-powered surfboard thing. [6] Crash getting the crap blown out of him.





flogging it second-hand or exchanging it.

Only by completing hidden areas can Crash collect the coloured crystals, which then serve to fill in the transparent platforms, allowing him access to other crystals, and so on. It's a welcome addition but a little derivative of another well-known 3D platform game you might have heard of...



Indeed, after an auspicious start - Crash is transported to the first warp room, whereupon a Doctor Cortex hologram foretells of the perils ahead - you very quickly realise that by Crash Bandicoot 2 what they really mean is Crash Bandicoot: More Of The Same. Admittedly there's a lot of variety in the game styles, but they're all pretty much the same as in the first title. You have your running into the screen, jumping across platforms and over the water. There's the running towards the screen being chased by a very large thing (including giant boulders and an enormous polar bear).

## SIX LEVELS OF INTELLIGENCE

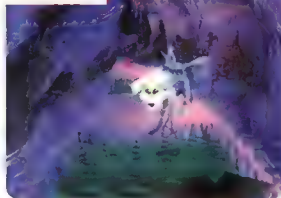
Warp room 3: Sewers



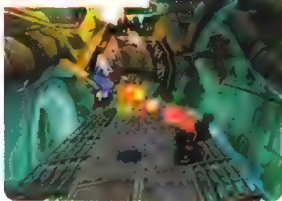
Road To Ruin



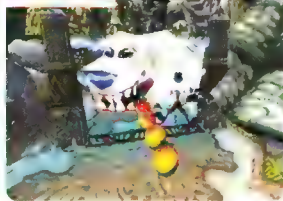
Bear Down



Sooner Or Later



Un-Bearable



Plant Food



**E**nter the third warp room for a choice of five levels: **Road To Ruin** - Possums, monkeys and crumbling platforms in a maze. **Bear Down** - Ride the polar bear cub over icy wastes and whales. **Sewer Or Later** - Dark tunnels with water, electric eels and evil welders. **Un-Bearable** - Crash has to log it from papa polar bear, avoiding chasms and electric fences. **Plant Food** - More running water and handycoot-eating plants.

# Crash Bandicoot 2



INTRO

Then there's a repeat performance from the classic sideways-scrolling levels. And finally we pay homage to the hilarious 'Crash on hog-back racing into the distance levels' - only this time it's a polar bear cub and we're jumping over ice flows and avoiding killer whales.

It's all terribly well done and, we think, incredibly good looking, but there's almost nothing new here. The game styles we've seen before, and almost all of the new features - monkey-swinging from wire-mesh walkways, platforms which appear when you've collected gems, slippery-slidey ice levels, and so on - are either staple platform fare or rather poorly ripped off from Super Mario 64.

So we're in something of a dilemma: CB2

is obviously an improvement of CB but not quite as good as CB3. The annoying flaws of the first instalment have been ironed out, and the learning curve is maybe just a tad gentler than either of its peers, but the gameplay isn't quite as open as it would become.

Most of the newness of *Crash Bandicoot 2* lay in the tweaked structure and the graphics, the mechanics, the game styles, the situations, the general feel of the game are all a bit too familiar to veterans of 1.

So then: if you've played either of the other two *Crash Bandicoots* and loved them to bits, here you are - another 27 levels.

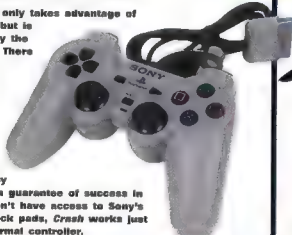
If you played the original and found it mildly annoying, try this improved version at a bargain price. And if you've never played *Crash Bandicoot* at all, this is the better of the first two and, of course, yours for a crisp, um, twenty pound note. Oh, and if you hate platformers so much, why the hell have you just spent the last 10 minutes reading this review? Duh.

Pete Wilton



## CONTROLLING THE COOT

**C**rash Bandicoot not only takes advantage of the Analog joystick, but is enhanced no end by the added subtlety of control. There are certainly times where Crash benefits from being able to tip-tee along. Instead of running at full pelt everywhere; and in those tricky levels where Crash rides on the back of other creatures (pictured elsewhere), the level of control afforded by the Analog pad is almost a guarantee of success in itself. Of course, if you don't have access to Sony's snazzy Analog or Dual Shock pads, *Crash* works just fine 'n' dandy with the normal controller.



(1) Crash goes all sparky whenever he's transported from level to level. (2) Ripper Roo (inset) is the bonkers guardian of level one. (3) Avoid his bomb-placing antics, and simply wait for the mad marsupial to blow himself up!

### VERDICT

|             |   |                    |        |
|-------------|---|--------------------|--------|
| ■ GRAPHICS  | 8 | ■ ORIGINAL RELEASE | Nov 97 |
| ■ GAMEPLAY  | 8 | ■ ORIGINAL SCORE   | 8      |
| ■ LIFESPAN: | 8 | ■ DURABILITY       | 8      |

Better than CB1, cheaper than CB3, *Crash Bandicoot 2* stands up as a platform romp very well, and is as fluidly enjoyable as ever.

Official Sony  
**PlayStation**  
Platinum Special

**8**  
OUT OF 10

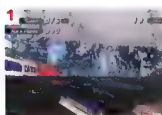


PlayStation

# Destruction Derby 2

With the third version of this Psygnosis classic and a new effort from the original team recently announced at the E3 show in America,

is there still a place in our hearts for Derby number two?



(1) This isn't a fancy special move you can pull off. You've simply been flipped over by one of your rather unfriendly opponents. (2) Head for the middle of the arena and do some damage. (3) Whoops, there I go again. (4) Anargh! (5) Damn, now I'm stuck in the middle of a pile-up. (6) Ah, yes. This time I've been spun around, so I'm travelling the wrong way.



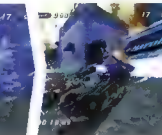
It's very rare to find a racing game that tries to be different and actually manages to succeed in its weighty task. Even more elusive than that, though, is finding a driving game where the actual aim of the game is NOT necessarily to finish first.

In *Destruction Derby 2* you obviously grab the odd stray point for finishing in a favourable position, but pain is the name of the game here and the most points are to be gleaned from mashing the crap out of anything unfortunate enough to 'park in your space', so to speak.

Even though the game was released nearly three years ago, there's been little to match its originality, playability and sheer colon-shrinking speed.

While retaining the flavour of the original, *DD2* delivers a much more finely-tuned and well-balanced racing experience. There are three modes of play: *Wreckin' Racing*, *Stock Car Racing* and *Destruction Derby*. *Wreckin' Racing* takes place over seven tracks and while the ultimate aim is to finish, the emphasis is on smashing up the other cars (you are awarded points for damage inflicted). *Stock Car Racing* is much more straightforward with the sole aim being to finish the race first (again over seven courses). *Destruction Derby*, as if you needed to be told, takes

## DESTRUCTION DERBY MODE



The Total Destruction option is mad. You get to play through four arenas but it'll take you ages to become good enough to progress past the first one - look at these screenshots to get an idea of how rough it gets out there. This isn't the best part of the game, but it is the most action-packed.



|                 |               |              |            |
|-----------------|---------------|--------------|------------|
| ■ PUBLISHER:    | Psygnosis     | ■ DEVELOPER: | In-house   |
| ■ RELEASE DATE: | November 1996 | ■ ORIGIN:    | UK         |
| ■ PRICE:        | £19.99        | ■ STYLE:     | Racing sim |

[1] One of the rare screenshots in which your sorbo is undamaged and facing in pretty much the right direction. [2] Crunch! The pace is almost even. [3] Wahay! Got through this time. [4] Ready? [5] This is going to hurt. [6] And it's another crash.



While the first version played on its destructive nature, *DD2* has placed more emphasis on racing.

place over four arenas and involves simply smashing the hell out of each other and trying to remain the last one standing, or winning. There's also a Time Trial option – always a winner. In each of these events you can opt to merely practice or go for the full tournament.

As before, there are 20 opponents all baying for your blood, but this time around not only are they more intelligent, they look a lot better too (they're made up of more than twice the number of polygons).

**The cars are more detailed and you can now watch with glee as wheels, bonnets and boots come flying off on impact.**

In truth, we could go on for the whole review talking about the new features so let's get it all over with in one go. *Destruction Derby* featured six tracks, one bowl arena, two track features, no real-time lighting effects and only one sort of debris and a smoke effect. *Destruction Derby 2* features seven tracks, four bowl arenas, longer tracks, nine tracks features (such as tunnels, jumps, and so on), a pit option, full Gouraud shading, four types of

debris, four damage effects, four-wheel suspension and full 3D crashes. Pretty impressive.

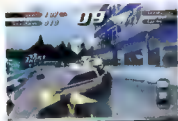
The most obvious improvement, though, is invisible. The game has been made to play a lot better. While the first version played on its destructive nature (to the detriment of long-term fun), this sequel has placed more emphasis on racing. The Stock Car racing provides high-speed thrills, the wider tracks and banked corners means there's less frequent crashing, and the new pit option means you can now at least have some hope of finishing a race.

There are still a few niggles, however. Like the *Destruction Derby* mode for example. There's a practice



[1] No, no, no, no, no. [2] RUN AWAY! [3] Oh for heaven's sake. Will this nightmare never end? [4] It's a bit intimidating when you're inside the car and everyone else is bearing down on you.

# Playtest

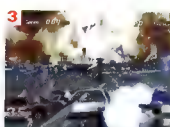




# Destruction Derby 2



Choose a car. Grippy but slow. Boodle. Average Amateur. Or fast-but-not-too-good at-road-holding Pro.



[1] Ouch! Another mistake. But I think I've got the hang of it now. [2] Doh! It's happened again. However, I really have realised my mistake and I won't be caught again. [3] Apart from this time. But I kind of anticipated that one. I'll just restart and... [4] NOOOOO... [5] Now I have no wheel.



option and a Total Destruction option. Given that one is practice, it's safe to assume that the other is a full tournament that you move on to when you have practiced enough right? Well, so it is. But the difficulty level is all cacked up. After much playing in practice mode you think 'Yeah, I'm pretty tasty at this now!' and you enter Total Destruction. Big mistake. You get buried in record time, even on the first arena. Basically, the leap between practice and tournament is too great, and it's rather off-putting.

Also, in the racing modes, you always start at the

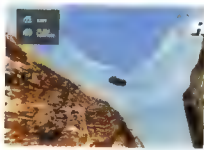
front of the grid. Great, you might think. But what tends to happen, when you're a novice at least, is that you get about half a lap in, someone clips your rear end (naar) and you spin out. This invariably puts you in around 16th position. This becomes less of a problem when you get a bit better, but initially it's bloody frustrating and could have been avoided with the implementation of a proper grid system.

But all of these problems are minor irritations which dissipate in time. Once you've overcome these frustrations you can sit back and appreciate not only the massively improved features of this tremendous sequel, but the superbly polished gameplay which puts it right up there with the top few PlayStation racers. You could argue the toss about whether it's as good as leading Platinum racers such as *Wipeout 2097* and *F1 97* until you're blue in the face. The fact is, it's different and it's brilliant.

Andrew Collins



## IN-FLIGHT ENTERTAINMENT



One outstanding feature sadly missing from the released game is the superb replay suite. 'Technical Issues' forced Paynopsis to rip it out at the last minute. Just to annoy you, here's how it looked.

### VERDICT

■ GRAPHICS

■ GAMEPLAY

■ LIFESPAN

9

9

9

■ ORIGINAL RELEASE:

■ ORIGINAL SCORE:

■ DURABILITY

Nov 96

9

9

Remarkably enough, *DD2*'s aged very well indeed. Wait for the third one if you must, but there's no guarantee it'll be any better than this.

9

OUT OF 10

Official UK PlayStation Platinum Special



(1,2) It's the orange pants, Law. You always get your head kicked in wearing them. (3) King's a bloke who wears a leopard mask. When he growls after emerging victorious in a dust up, he growls magnificently. (4) King, sans jumper, gives Paul a decent right hook. Poster.



# Tekken 2

With the current *Tekken* talk seeming to focus around Namco's spanker, *Tekken Tag Tournament*, maybe it's ripe time to reappraise this second outing for Heihachi and his merry mob of pompous pugilists.



A pugilist's dream, *Tekken* is quite simply the finest game around. Unrivaled depth and playability. We score it nine but add more points anyway. It's the best. Gosh. That's what the *Official PlayStation Magazine* said about the original incarnation of the world's grandest beat 'em up back in PSM2. And what good days they were. We were all really proud of our new grey machine. *Ridge Racer* seemed like the smartest compact disc in the history of all things past and *Wipeout* was reet trendy – almost to the point of giving it large on a ragga tip, as Ravey Davey Gravy might have had it. *Tekken* was indeed the icing on an already fancy cake.

A brief history. *Tekken* originally appeared on the Namco-designed System 11 coin-op board. Qué, Meester Fawty? Well, this '11' fellow is basically the nnards of a PlayStation with a bit more RAM (Random Access Memory), a ROM (Read-Only Memory) board and a sound board. Using System 11 was (and remains) a relatively inexpensive means for coin-op companies to produce arcade games. When you want to update a title you can simply bosh in a new ROM board with the new game. Then Tony Hart

can paint on some spanking new graphics.

Aaaaand perhaps most importantly, as far we're concerned, these coin-op titles are virtually ready-made PlayStation games, which is of course what *Tekken* became. In fact the PlayStation incarnation is BETTER than the coin guzzler, with more characters and bosses AND a fabulous rendered introduction sequence. It was easily the best-seller on the manor, with over a million units shifted across the globe. *Tekken* is the motion-captured MASTER OF ALL IT SURVEYS. Bow. Did you know that quite a few folk die every year from biting? Down in the Japanese tube

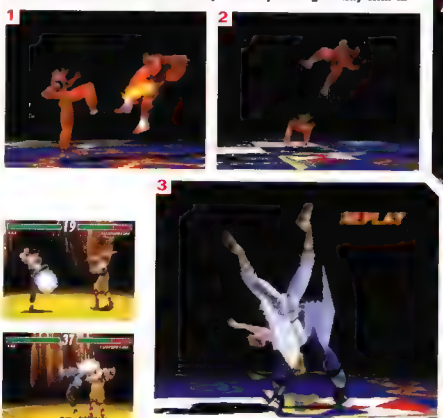


(1) Heihachi truly has the finest haircut in the history of computer games. Two great tufts. (2) Lei practices keepy-wocky while Yoshimitsu waits patiently. Bo him.



|               |              |            |             |
|---------------|--------------|------------|-------------|
| PUBLISHER:    | SCEE         | DEVELOPER: | Namco       |
| RELEASE DATE: | October 1996 | ORIGIN:    | Japan       |
| PRICE:        | £19.99       | STYLE:     | Beat 'em up |

[1,2] Law shows that you don't have to be a boss dressed as a sumo wrestler to win bouts. The old characters are still the best, only now they're light-sourced as opposed to Gouraud-shaded. [3] More is the boss with wings, Angel, performing a very unusual manoeuvre. [4] You simply don't do that to Kazuya and expect to get away with it.



New character Lei Wulong has a splendid armory and he shows it against Yoshimitsu.



station at midday, people bow to each other on the platform but sometimes heads clash and they fall before an oncoming train. SCRLDGE. Shudder.

To two. Or 2, as it's known. The sequel wasn't completely re-written. Nobody's going to once-over the game and cry. But that's not *Tekken*. The original was taken to a drawing board and slapped around, flavoured with fragrant spices and tuned to move with a groove of Michael Johnson-esque grace. Be in no doubt that heavy tweaking has been administered.

Shall we talk about the old, 'Is real-time light sourcing a grander option than your fancy Gouraud shading?' question? We'll get our anoraks, then. No, please, don't leave just yet. The original was dripping with Gouraud-shaded polygons – the process which allows the artists to fashion subtle coloured blends on the characters' limbs, effectively making them appear more rounded.

But, as Martin Fry out of ABC once said, things get better second time around. For part two, Namco eschewed the inspiration of Henri Gouraud and opted for the work of Sir Bartholomew Light-Sourcing. This altered the colour saturation on the face of the polygons – a fighter's armpit, for example, is darker than his elbow. Because it's underneath and in the shade, right? The pugilists look considerably more angular than their episode one counterparts. A mite cubist, Sister Wendy might add, were she perusing screenshots for a BBC2 special on videogame graphics. As luck would have it, the men-at-arms looked incredibly polished, stylish even. And then you need a battle arena to show them off. The backdrops remained a two-dimensional parallax diorama



THE APPLICATION OF THE LIGHTING TECHNIQUE ENSURES THAT THE FIGHTSCAPES ARE ATMOSPHERIC AND, IN SOME CASES, FABULOUSLY REALISTIC.

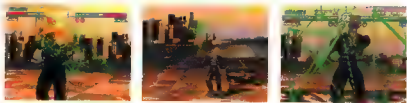
with texture-mapped 3D floors. Now these might not look quite as sophisticated as the then incredibly realistic settings of the *Toshinden* gang, but clearly Namco believe exemplary movement of the fighters to be of paramount importance. They'd be right, and with the performance running at 60 frames per second, who's to argue? But the application of the lighting technique ensures that the fightscapes are atmospheric and, in many cases, fabulously realistic.

Some of the original backdrops were revamped and a host of new ones added. The Shaolin Temple, home of Baek, and King's church setting, were particularly memorable, especially when the light shines through the stained glass window in the latter. Visually the game was improved, the light sourcing giving the characters considerably more depth. When limb met limb, light flashes accentuated the feeling of physical contact, the shadows cast by the movement adding weight to the issue.

Fighters... LINE UP. The original cast returned bedecked in rigout fresh, and extra moves to whump. All our old favourites from the first game, Michelle, Yoshimitsu (the space Ninja), Paul, King, Jack et al. ►



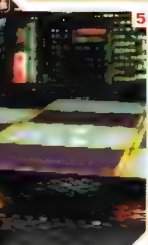
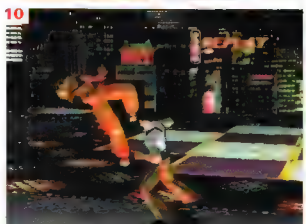
## PRETENDERS READY



One of the most, um, interesting features in *Tekken 2* is the first-person perspective mode where you view your opponent through a mass of wireframes. It takes a bit of getting used to.



# PlayTest!



[1] A big lizard with blue boxing gloves squashes a lass in black pants. [2] But no. She's a coiled spring. [3] Michelle and Jun do hattle on the hill. [4] The big feller takes a shot from Michelle. [5] Lei Wulong is arguably the finest character. [6] Practice mode. [7] The boss with wings. [8] Crushed by the polygon bear. [9] Law gets hit. [10] Law gets hit again. [11] A high hit in training. [12] Juns snaps an arm. Not hers, either. [13] Who's in the ascendancy here?

# Tekken 2



**(1)** Michelle's quick and has a decent range of moves but, just occasionally, she's bound to fall flat to your good old-fashioned violence, and Jack 2's one of the hardest for that. **(2)** There's a general rule in this business that crap captions like 'Gosh look, they're dancing/having sex' etc. are banned, so we simply won't go down that creaky path. **(3)** A clever games journalist is able to 'grab' the most action-packed shots for inclusion in reviews such as these... this screenshot is the perfect example. **(4)** The intro's in Tekken 2 are better than ever (unless, of course, 'ever' happens to be Tekken 3, in which case things have changed somewhat).

► sport new garb and had the added bonus of more bullets to their armoury. New boy Lei Wolong's closest equivalent, Tekken's speaking, was probably Law. Lei wears these amazing Seventies flares matched with a charming white shirt. He has this brilliant move where he lies down and pretends to be dead but then, in the twinkling of an eye, he's up like a coiled spring with a flying two-footed leap.

The other new character available from the off is Jun Kazama, a female Bushido warrior – you know, martial arts an' that. Add to this a further three sub-bosses, together with a kangaroo and a lizard (Roger and Alex, respectively) and you've got yourself seven new batters to thump around with. As in the original, each fighter has different attributes, some performing lightning kicks and punches, others slightly heavier in build but swinging to more devastating effect. Bruce Irvin, an American kickboxer, has a fun mohican, a threatening tattoo and some of the most brutal manoeuvres in the land of beat 'em up. The ultimate boss is the Devil, a huge bloody beast with hooves, wings and a penchant for extreme thuggery – and his laser doesn't do you many favours, either.

Some of the manoeuvres (as in the original) are horrific. When someone pulls back your neck with a forearm there's a really quite chilling CRACK.

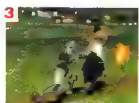
Tekken 2 can be played in six different ways: Arcade, Verses, Practice, Time Attack, Team Battle and Survival. In the Practice option, you can rehearse any moves you like. Your adversary won't hit you back, nor can you destroy him. And, best of all, on-screen indicators tell you what buttons to press to pull off combinations.

Bigger, better, faster, more, is the order of play



Tekken 2 was a shining gem in the highly-polished crown of PlayStation gaming. It's indisputable that beat 'em ups provide the ultimate one-on-one challenge and Namco provide the means. At the time, no other game had characters that moved with such delightful, fluid ease. No other game had such intuitive gameplay, simple to acknowledge the basics yet incredibly complex beneath the surface. But then, no other game was called Tekken 2.

Dean Mortlock



**(1)** The replays are the perfect opportunity to punish your opponent further. Go on, rub it in! **(2)** There's no two ways about it, Neihachi is pure evil. **(3)** Surely being the only one with a ruddy great sword's a bit unfair.



PlayStation  
Platinum Special

## VERDICT

■ GRAPHICS

10

■ GAMEPLAY

10

■ LIFESPAN

8

■ ORIGINAL RELEASE

Oct 96

■ ORIGINAL SCORE

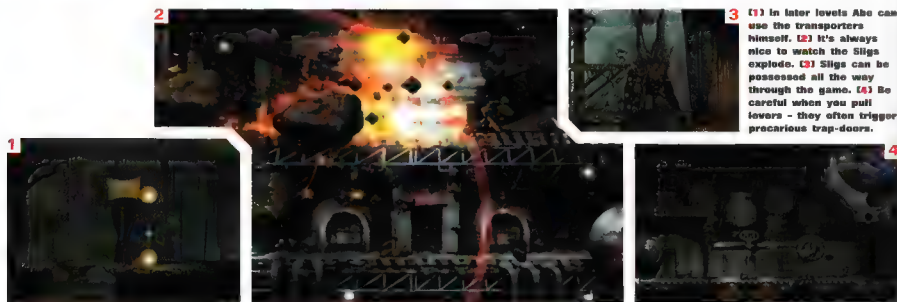
10

■ DURABILITY

9

The very best in its day, Tekken 2 is still virtually perfect, although you might prefer to wait for Tekken 3's Platinum release if you don't already have it.

9  
OUT OF 10



**1** In later levels Abe can use the transporters himself. **2** It's always nice to watch the Sligs explode. **3** Sligs can be possessed all the way through the game. **4** Be careful when you pull levers - they often trigger precarious trap-doors.

## Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee

It looked like **time was up** for the humble platform game - until a **small green farter** came along. It can be an **odd world** sometimes, can't it?



**P**latform games, eh? Surely a genre at the end of its natural lifespan? Especially those two dimensional ones, and even more especially the 'flick-screen' style - much beloved by programmers and gamers, alike when the Commodore 64 was the height of computer game sophistication. But now? In a world with *Resident Evil*, *Tomb Raider*, and their ilk? When even Nintendo have switched to 3D for the latest outing of their brain-crushing cute little Italian plumber? Nah, the platform game has surely had its day.

At least that's what we thought. Then along came the first game in the much-lauded and just as much hyped *Oddworld* series. And guess what? It's a platform game - a two-dimensional, flick-screen platform game. And it's very, very good indeed.

*Abe's Oddysee* casts you as the young Mudokon of the title. Like many of your race on *Oddworld*, you worked as a slave in the vast Rupture Farms food processing plant, scrubbing floors and trying to avoid being beaten by the Slig guards. Then you stumbled into a restricted area of the factory, and discovered that not only were your people being used as slave labour, they were also due to be on the menu themselves. Horrified, you made the obvious choice and decided to get the hell out of Rupture. Fast.

So begins arguably the best 2D platformer ever. At the start of the game, you must guide Abe through the vast Rupture Farms in an effort to escape and avoid becoming dinner. Along the way, though, you discover that fate has chosen you to be the erm, chosen one -

the Mudokon who will free his people from slavery and overthrow the evil reign of Molluck the Glukkon, despotic dictator of *Oddworld*. If you can survive long enough, that is.

At its core, *Abe's Oddysee* is a fairly typical platform game. You move Abe around, jumping over gaps, climbing up and down levels, and so on. So what makes it so great, then? Well, the problem when trying to describe what's so good about *Abe's Oddysee* is where to start. Almost every aspect of the game is so slick, polished and damn playable.

For want of a better place, then, we'll start with the graphics. Put simply, *Abe's Oddysee* is stunning. Every single screen (and there are hundreds) has obviously been lavished with the same degree of care and attention - which is to say, an awful lot. All of the backgrounds have been pre-rendered, featuring imaginative designs, great attention to detail, and a unique, slightly quirky style. On top (and behind) of this sit the characters themselves. Not only are all the characters and creatures in *Abe's Oddysee* brilliantly designed, they're also brilliantly animated. Abe himself has hundreds of frames devoted to him, and it shows - the range of



**1** Ah, the sign of success. It's always a joy to see one of your mates escape to freedom. **2**, **3** A couple of examples of the marvellous scenery.

Both the in-game sound and graphics are complemented by some of the slickest presentation ever.





PUBLISHER

GT Interactive

DEVELOPER

Oddworld Inhabitants

RELEASE DATE

October 1997

ORIGIN

United States

PRICE

\$44.99

STYLE

Platform adventure

## ABE THE AGILE

**T**hroughout his *Oddyssey*, Abe is faced with a staggering variety of locations, puzzles, dangers, and goals. Luckily for him, he's a versatile little chap, with an equally staggering range of moves and abilities. Indeed it is this realistic range of functions that Abe can perform which really endears the little fella to you.



### Walk

Abe's basic mode of locomotion. Handy for, erm, walking around.



### Run

For a little more haste, and to make bigger jumps.



### Sneak

If you can't kill 'em, sometimes you just have to avoid 'em.



### Hide

Lurking in the shadows is a good way to avoid the Sligs.



### Jump

Abe can jump straight up, or leap to either side.



### Crouch

Good for hiding behind cover, and picking things up.



### Roll

Handy for dodging bullets and getting through small gaps.



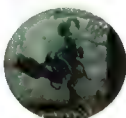
### Hoist

Abe can pull himself up, drop down or hoist ropes.



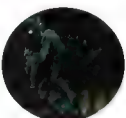
### Throw

Abe can throw stuff about, distracting Sligs and Slogs.



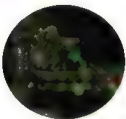
### Ride

Once he finds his trusty steed, Elum, Abe can ride about in style.



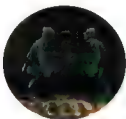
### Push

For moving things out of the way, or into the right spot.



### Use

A multi-purpose ability, handy for pulling levers, throwing switches etc...



### Talk

Abe can talk to other Mudokons, and get them to follow his simple orders.



### Chant

By using his mystic power, Abe can activate teleporters and possess Sligs.

movements and actions he can perform is seemingly limitless. Despite this, none of the other creatures are any less impressive.

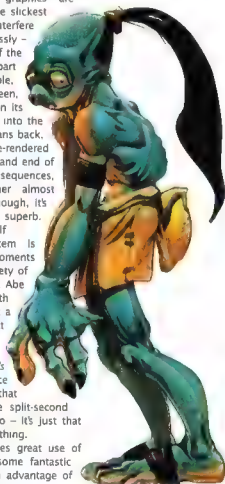
Combined with this visual delight is the sound. All of the effects are spot-on, from the throaty atonfire of the Sligs' guns – complete with the rattle of shell casings hitting the floor – to the annoyed 'Hurrump' that Abe makes as he gets up after you've run him full pelt into a wall. And just for a chance, none of them are run by strident, repetitive background 'music'. Instead, *Abe's Oddyssey* features a subtle, atmospheric score that's dynamic, changing to represent the current situation without ever interfering with the gameplay itself.

Both the in-game sound and graphics are complemented perfectly by some of the slickest presentation ever. The cut-scenes never interfere with the gameplay, but blend in seamlessly – many actually run straight in and out of the action. Enter a transport pod to another part of the factory on the first level, for example, and the camera zooms into the screen, following the pod as it swings along on its gimbals, spins around, and then backs into the next stop. At which point the camera pans back, and you're playing the game – the pre-rendered backdrops have been used as the start and end of the even more stunning pre-rendered sequences, so they each merge into the other almost unnoticeably. Great while all this is, though, it's still not what makes *Abe's Oddyssey* so superb. That comes down to the gameplay itself.

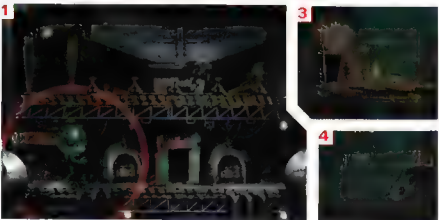
To start with, the control system is straightforward and intuitive, taking moments to pick up, but allowing for a wide variety of different possibilities. The result is that Abe is responsive and easy to get to grips with. Better yet, the way he moves a step at a time puts paid to all that pixel-perfect positioning nonsense that's been the bane of the platform game since computer games were invented. In *Abe's Oddyssey*, either you're in the right place or you're a step away from it. It's not that some parts of the game don't require split-second timing and fluid joystick skills – they do – it's just that it's not maddeningly prissy about everything.

What's more, the level design makes great use of Abe's flexibility, presenting you with some fantastic possibilities. All of which is then taken advantage of by the actual puzzles and tasks themselves.

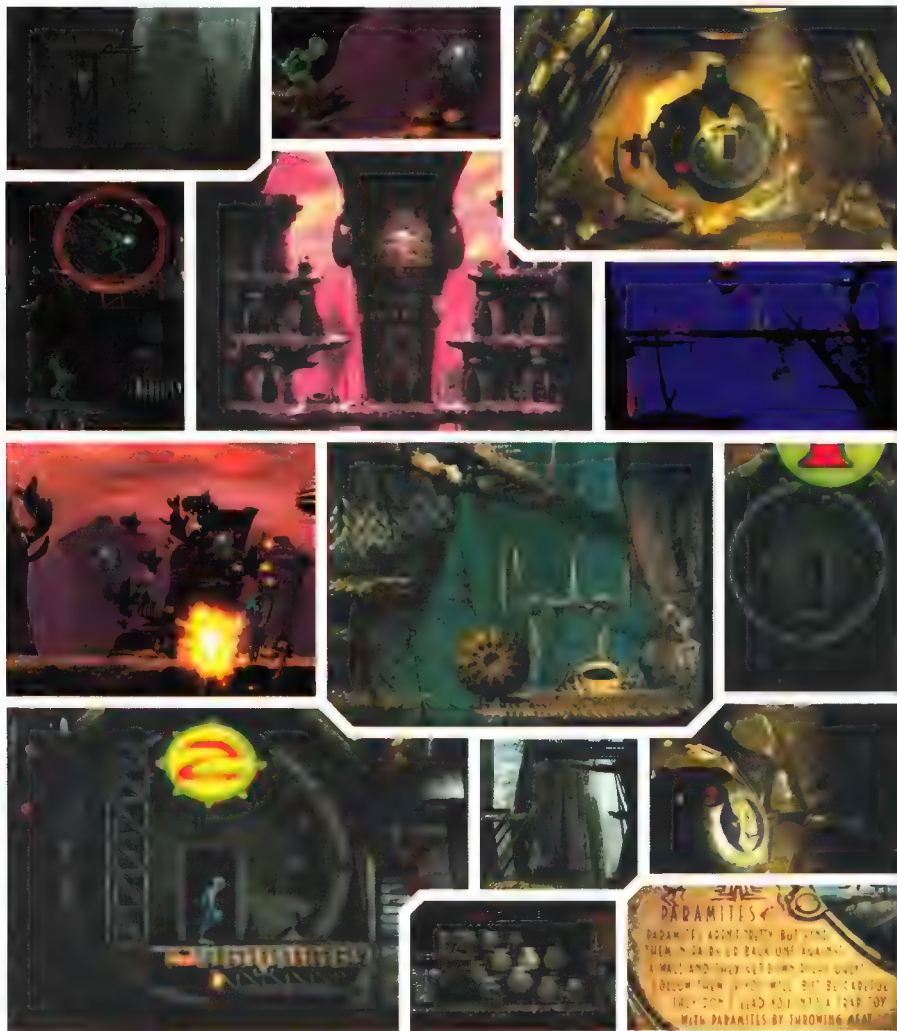
It's here that *Abe's Oddyssey* really shines, for it features some of the most cunning and intelligent puzzles ever. You have infinite lives in this game – simply returning



(1) Later in the game you'll learn to disarm mines by chanting. (2) Another of those stunning cut-scenes. A movie is now on its way. (3) Enter the pipe to appear in the background. (4) Watch it.

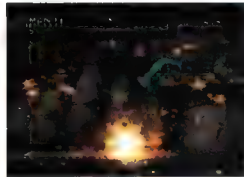


# Playtest



# Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee

One of the good things about Abe is he comes with unlimited lives, so you needn't worry about trying anything out of the ordinary – it might just work. The only thing the test below proved is how far Abe's body parts are flung when he explodes.



This is a test of your brain too. Some of the most fiendish game design ever is tucked away here...

to the last 'save spot' when you die. *Abe's Oddysee* is not simply a test of your joymap manipulation, then, it's also a demanding test of your brain. There's some of the most fiendish game design ever tucked away here, and it's simply a joy to behold. These puzzles aren't simply hard (although many are), they're so clever that you just have to appreciate them. *Oddworld Inhabitants*, the developers, have pulled out every trick in the platform game book, thrown in a variety from other genres, and given everything a slightly wacky spin to create one of the most challenging and yet addictive games around. Even more impressive, in some ways, is the structure of the game. Although you are guided towards certain goals and, of course, the end of each level, which puzzles you solve and which you decide to leave is largely up to you. Many can even be dealt with in a number of different ways, depending on how your brain works

Little of this would be possible if it weren't for the Aware Lifeforms in Virtual Environments system used by the game. This Artificial Intelligence routine controls the actions of all of the creatures in the game, according to their specific type and situation ignoring the somewhat contrived name, A.L.I.V.E. is a very clever system, and the reason why so many of the puzzles in *Abe's Oddysee* are dynamic, making great use of the other characters. You can sneak past Slog guards, trick Slogs into fighting each other, talk to other Mudokons and get them to do what you want them to, even possess other creatures and control them directly – using a Slog guard to gun down his friends and then throwing him into an electric fence is strangely satisfying, that's for sure.

This game redefined the humble platformer, dragging it up to previously unforeseeable heights and presenting the PlayStation with another instant classic. It does have to be said that the game can be frustrating at times, but the incredible sense of satisfaction to be had more than makes up for it, and you'll get plenty of entertainment for your 20 notes. And considering that the sequel, *Abe's Exoddus*, failed to better this, you can't say fairer than that now can you?

Rob Pegley



## ODD WORLD: ODD PEOPLE

In your journey through Oddworld, you come face to face with a wide variety of weird and wonderful races and creatures...



### Mudokons

These are Abe's people, enslaved by the evil Molluck and used as menial workers in the vast Rupture Farms factory. Only the chosen one can save them from their horrible fate – and that's Abe.

### Elum

Abe's 'pet', a dinosaur-like creature that looks ugly and smells worse. Still, he's incredibly loyal to Abe, and can run and jump a lot further. He's also particularly partial to honey. And in a way he's quite cute.

### Sligs

Cruel, brutal and heavily armed, the Sligs act as guards and slave masters for Molluck. Luckily they're not too bright, and Abe can possess them with his newly gained mystical powers to great effect.

### Paramites

Once, long ago, the Paramites were sacred to the Mudokons. Now they're harvested in their thousands and turned into pies at Rupture Farms. On their own they're not too bad – but in a pack they're evil.

### Scrabs

Like the smaller Paramites, Scrabs are being slaughtered in their thousands to feed the voracious appetite of Rupture Farms. Even their ancestral breeding area, a vast and ancient temple, is under threat.

### Slogs

A Slog's best friend is his Slog. Their evil masters aren't exactly loveable, but the Slogs are even nastier. And even more stupid. Their key weakness is their own vicious nature – Slogs attack each other on sight.

### Molluck the Glukkon

The evil mastermind behind Rupture Farms, the enslavement of the Mudokons, the slaughter of the Scrabs and Paramites, and lots of other nasty stuff. Fate has chosen Abe to stop him.

### VERDICT

9 GRAPHICS

9 GAMEPLAY

9 LIFESPAN

9 ORIGINAL RELEASE

9 ORIGINAL SCORE

8 DURABILITY

Oct 97

Arguably better than its full priced sequel, and therefore probably the best platformer ever, *Abe's Oddysee* deserves a place in your collection.

9

OUT OF 10

Official UK PlayStation Platinum Special



# Playtest



(1) It's one of the finest moments in videogaming history. As the ball sails over the wall, the players in said wall jump and spin around to see where the ball's gone. (2) An impressive entrance. (3) Jürgen kicks off. (4) Polenzed without a shame. (5,6) The camera pans along each team at the start.

## ISS Pro

'Scorchio', cries the execrable commentator.

'Oi, NOOO!', you counter...



**D**ecisions, eh? Life's full of them. Should I go for that extra pint, even though my brain's in danger of dribbling out of my ears and gravity is likely to finally get the better of me if I do? Would it be wise to purchase that speedy convertible when my girlfriend's got her heart set on a Vauxhall Nova? And, with more relevance to this review, should I shell out the extra 20 quid for *ISS Pro 98*, when the earlier version's looking pretty tempting at Platinum price?

Of course, if it's football perfection you're looking at, then you really should look to *ISS Pro 98*.

But we'd hate to take anything away from this classic game. Once you forgive them for the awful commentary (more on that later) and average graphics, the full depth and power of the gameplay starts to shine through like a brilliant sunrise on a warm summer's morning. Arguments still rage about the solid gameplay of *ISS Pro* against the massive licence and slick presentation of the FIFA games from Electronic Arts but, for our money, you really can't do better than Konami's game.

You do notice pretty quickly, though, that little time





PUBLISHER:

Konami

DEVELOPER:

Konami

RELEASE DATE:

May 1997

ORIGIN:

Japan

PRICE:

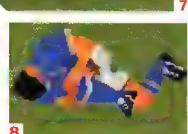
£19.99

STYLE:

Football



[1] You can replay a goal from any angle and use the camera to swoop in and out. Great for two-player games. [2] The keeper must have seen it. Not much sign of movement, though. [3] Nice to see them using a regulation ball. [4] Put it just over the head of the little fellow. [5] The player animation is incredibly realistic. [6] Germany take on Brazil. [7] Joy and despair. The players cheer and mope when goals go in. [8] Down like a sack of spuds. [9] Mmm, think he might be a defender. [10] The strip detail is phenomenal. [11] The Brazilian has just crooped an Argentinian. [12] Samba heat time.



## LET'S SEE THAT AGAIN...



'Well, Desmond, as you can see, the Croatians attacked down the left and the ball was crossed into the big number 10 who produced a fine bicycle kick.



[1] Perhaps not the hardest of saves? [2] It's a good intro but contains few surprises. [3] Don't worry, this move's replicated in the game. [4] Nice. [5] The defeated team leave the pitch in shame.

has been spent on the presentation of *ISS Pro*. There's a typical intro and, when you get to the options screens, spartan is one word that springs to mind. This really matters not, for impressions improve when you finally get in to the game. Can we talk about the kits, please? You've just got to see them. All the team strips are incredibly accurate, right down to the Adidas stripes on the jerseys, shorts and socks. Okay, so you can't read the Umbro and Adidas signs on the England and Germany shirts, but you can see the squiggle and badges. Jolly well done, Mr Konami

You get a grand view of the strips when the teams line up, and as the camera pans along you can pick out recognisable players. 'Oh look, there's Fabrizio Ravanelli', you cry. 'Only he's called Coluto', you continue, a mite disappointed, but still pleased that he's got grey hair.

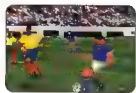
**Roberto Baggio is on the bench - he's called Riggio - and you can spot the 'Divine Ponytail' a mile off.** Look out also for young Gascoigne, Carlos Valderrama, Jurgen the German, and a few others.

Let's play the game. Initially, it all seems rather stodgy, simply because the motion-captured players move at a pace their human counterparts are wont to. But once you've got used to the pace, you find that the game works beautifully. There's a cheeky pass-to-feet option - tap the X button and you knock a short ball to your nearest mate. You can also bosh a long ball, play a through-pass with the Triangle button, cross the ball

using one of the shoulder buttons and add a dash of pace with another. The 'through ball' (something of a novelty at the time) is a splendid feature which allows you to sneak the ball past the last defender into the path of your striker - the main difference being that it knocks the ball a couple of steps in front of the player rather than straight to his feet. *ISS Pro* is a game you get a feel for, a game where suddenly the play kicks into place. It's an instinct, a way of 'doing things'. You learn to ride tackles, learn to bash the pace button and sprint away from the last defender; learn to play that cunning through-ball when your attacker slips his marker. Something clicks into place, and the next minute you're speeding down the wing, skipping challenges, belting in a cross where your striker is waiting to rise like a salmon and head home. 'Terrible defending there, Des'.

The game is by no means perfect, though. The referees are dreadfully inconsistent - some might say that this makes it all the more realistic. You can perform terrible tackles, like taking the legs of a striker in the box, and the ref will turn a blind eye. But he'll blow up and show you the card for the most innocuous challenges. This often leads to free-for-alls in two-player games, players sliding in with injudicious abandon.

Another worry is the lack of goals scored from outside the 18-yard area. It rarely happens and when it does, it's usually because your keeper has fumbled like a buffoon. Shot power relates to how long you



## STRATEGY

**A**op to the Formation screen and you can fiddle with the team line-up and organise 'the lads'. Each player has a little 'smiley face' icon next to him which relates to how fit he is. There are five colour levels, from very unfit to super fit - red, orange, yellow, blue and grey. Best to swap the really grey (and blue), sad-looking chaps with a warmer sub.

The interesting bit, however, is the strategy



element, where you decide whether you want play attacking or defensively, or use the offside trap. Pressing the 'select' button during the game turns on whatever strategy you've selected - so, for example, if the opposition are attacking and you've chosen to play 'offside', bash the button at the right moment and your defence will spring forth. And it's a fabulous feeling when you pull it off correctly.



# ISS Pro



'Oh deary deary me, Des, it looks as though the defence has failed to learn its lesson. And what about that for shocking 'keeping?' 'Shut up, Alan.'

[1] Just a couple clutching on the edge of the box, here. Best to play a short ball, then turn and shoot. [2] The higher view of the pitch. [3] Sweet chip in the top corner. [4] The detail on the Spanish kit is wonderful.



hold down the Square button and it's difficult to judge. Mostly goals come from one-on-ones with 'keeps.

And the commentary is a farce. No one famous, just appalling soundbites. 'Scorchio', indeed. The German and French sportscasters are more bearable in a comical, 'ho-ho, listen to the foreigner' sort of way. The only time you can use the Replay function is after a goal and because the game is so beautifully animated, you yearn to look back on those awful tackles and the times where the ball rebounds off the bar.

ISS Pro is a game that delivers the visual delights, the gifted gameplay and the most sensational animation seen in a month of Sundays.

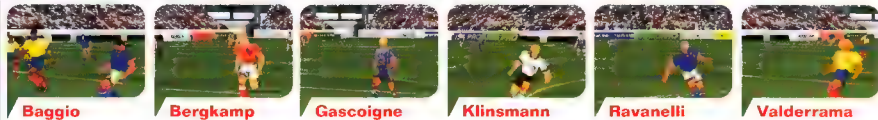


Quibbles aside, you really cannot fail with ISS Pro. Obviously superseded by its successor (and many other full price footy games), this remains a masterful example of how football can be done and, for 20 quid, it has to be one of the better Platinum purchasing decisions.

Steve Bradley



## SUPER SOCCER - GREAT (OLD) PLAYERS



### VERDICT

■ GRAPHICS

■ GAMEPLAY

■ JIFESPAN

7

9

9

■ ORIGINAL RELEASE

■ ORIGINAL SCORE

■ DURABILITY

May 97

9

7

Showing its age it may be, but there really is no better value football game available. Forget the ageing graphics, just feel that still-silky gameplay.

# 8

OUT OF 10

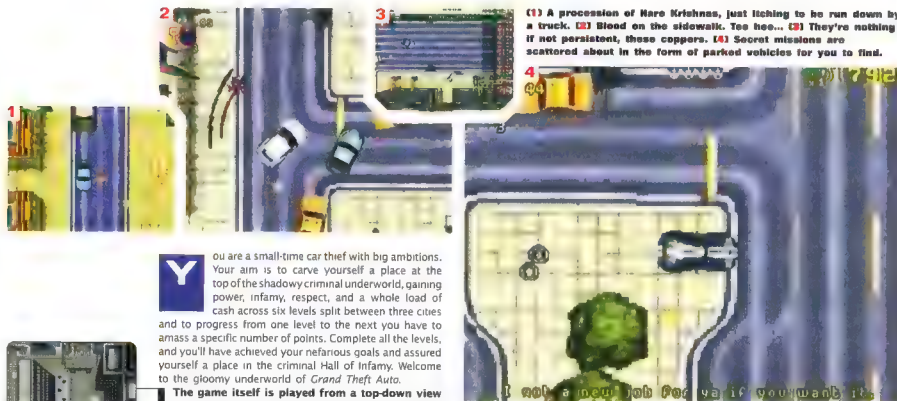
Official PS1  
**PlayStation**  
Platinum Special

# Playtest



# Grand Theft Auto

Does a game that features **drugs, stealing anything that moves, rather fruity language** and some of the most **violent crimes** known to humanity really have a place in a **civilised society** such as ours?



**Y**ou are a small-time car thief with big ambitions. Your aim is to carve yourself a place at the top of the shadowy criminal underworld, gaining power, infamy, respect, and a whole load of cash across six levels split between three cities and to progress from one level to the next you have to amass a specific number of points. Complete all the levels, and you'll have achieved your nefarious goals and assured yourself a place in the criminal Hall of Infamy. Welcome to the gloomy underworld of *Grand Theft Auto*.

The game itself is played from a top-down view of the city, centred on your current location, which scrolls as you move around, either on foot or in a vehicle of some kind. The faster you're moving, the more the viewpoint zooms out, allowing you to see further ahead. The controls are deceptively simple. You can turn left and right, accelerate forwards or backwards, use your current weapon, cycle through the weapons you have available, get in or out of a vehicle and brake or jump.

So far, so good, then. But what exactly do you do? Well, that's where *GTA* starts getting clever. Your only fixed goal in each level is to earn enough points to move to the next. How you go about getting them, though, is largely up to you. Each level does feature a wide variety of missions for you to complete. Some of these are easy to find – you simply follow a yellow arrow that points towards a row of pay phones. Answering a phone starts the mission. Your pager, on the other hand, can kick off a mission at





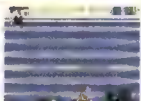
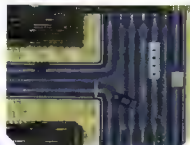
■ PUBLISHER: **BMG Interactive** ■ DEVELOPER: **DMA Design**  
 ■ RELEASE DATE: **December 1997** ■ ORIGIN: **UK**  
 ■ PRICE: **£19.99** ■ STYLE: **Criminal sim**



IT'S THE ROZZERS!

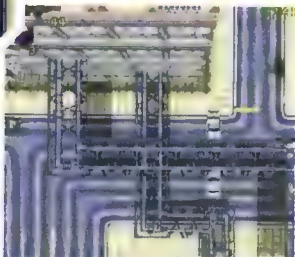


Just another day in the big city, *Grand Theft Auto* style - police blockades, car chases, hoobytrapped buses, dangerous driving, shoot-outs, dodgy criminal deals, and, of course, lots and lots of carnage.



YOU'LL NEVER TAKE ME ALIVE, COPPER!

STOP, OR WE'LL SHOOT!



FERRYING DRUGS OR MONEY, KIDNAPPING, BLOWING UP BUILDINGS, SMUGGLING... IT'S PROBABLY PART OF ONE MISSION OR ANOTHER.

any time. The missions - there are over 200 in the game - range across just about every imaginable criminal endeavour, from ferrying drugs, money or people from one place to another, to assassinations, get-away driving, kidnapping, blowing up buildings, smuggling, underage smoking... You name it, and if it's illegal, it's probably part of one mission or another. Nearly all of them are made up of multiple sections, some of which must be completed in a time limit, or with a specific vehicle. Completing a mission earns you points and increases your Score Multiplier, increasing the points you earn from further illegal acts.

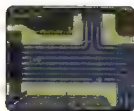
As well as completing missions, though, you also earn points for a vast range of other actions. Basically, if it's immoral, illegal, or just plain nasty, you get rewarded for it. Stealing cars and selling them at the docks, running over pedestrians, mugging innocent bystanders, going on a killing spree with a machinegun, causing acc dents - all these and more earn you points towards the total needed to progress. If you don't want to bother with the

missions, you don't have to. If you just want to stick to stealing cars and selling them, fine. If you want to go on a mass killing spree and see how many murders you can commit, no problem. Simply put, *GTA* gives you an entire city to play in, and leaves you to do pretty much what you want.

Of course, you can't expect to charge around like a maniac for long before the city's police force starts to take notice. Whenever you perform an illegal act, there's a chance that a nearby policeman will spot you, or someone will report it. Once this happens, you start being pursued by the boys in blue. The worse your crimes, the more effort they put into catching you, as represented by a row of five police icons at the top of the screen.

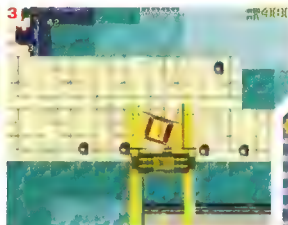
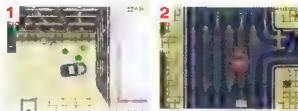
When you're on the run, police cars will start popping up all over the place and try to block your escape. If a copper gets next to you, either by just running up to you on foot or by reaching the driver's side door of the vehicle you're currently driving, you'll get arrested. This relieves you of all your weapons and equipment, and costs points to pay for your bail

OOPS! LOOKS LIKE THIS IS GONNA HURT...

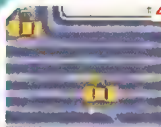




## YOU CAN GIVE THE COPS A GOOD RUN FOR THEIR MONEY, DODGING THROUGH ALLEYS AND MAKING SHANDRAKE TURNS TO SHAKE OFF PURSUIT...



**[1]** 'Info' power-ups give you hints. **[2]** Mow down a pedestrian, and the paramedics turn up. **[3]** Steal cars and sell them at the docks for easy points.



Of course, you can give the cops a good run for their money, dodging through alleys and making handbrake turns to shake off pursuit, smashing through roadblocks, and so on. You can also go on the offensive and shoot it out. Eventually, though, they will catch you unless you either complete a mission or pull into one of the respray shops scattered around each city, either of which clears your current 'wanted' status.

There's an awful lot to like about *Grand Theft Auto*. Each of the three cities is truly huge, and DMA has managed to create a real sense of them being living, breathing places. Pedestrians wander about, other people drive around, stopping at lights, overtaking slower drivers, and so on. Mug or shoot someone and an ambulance will appear shortly after to try and save your victim, blow up a car and fire engines scream up to control the blaze.

**All of which works in tandem with GTA's essentially free-form nature - you can complete each level by whatever means you fancy.** This very freedom, however, is something of a double-edged sword. Despite their surface differences, the missions really amount to driving from one place to another, and sometimes doing something at each spot, which can quickly become somewhat repetitive. No, to get the best out of *GTA* you have to experiment, explore, and try out new things. Unfortunately, this style of gaming isn't going to be to everyone's taste.

Another potential problem is the game's subject. In many ways DMA went out of its way to make *GTA* as controversial as possible, and it's succeeded admirably. This game caused a storm in the popular media, re-opening all the tired old debates about whether or not computer games are turning us all into sociopathic nutters. Beyond all the hype, though, the fact is that if you're easily offended, you're not going to enjoy this game, despite the tongue-in-cheek humour that runs throughout.

The biggest problem with *GTA*, though, is a lot more

basic, and a lot more obvious. As you've probably noticed by now, it's far from the most visually stunning game to appear on the PlayStation. *GTA* may not be the worst-looking PlayStation game ever, but it's certainly in the running. On the positive side, everything is at least functional - the cars, streets, buildings, and so on, are all recognisable for what they are, and the collision detection, for example, is spot-on.

Aesthetically, however, *GTA* leaves a lot to be desired. Everything has a very dated look, betraying the game's Amiga ancestry. In many cases, it actually seems that the artists have deliberately gone for a 'retro' look, which is probably very amusing for them, but just doesn't work for anyone else. Despite a few neat effects, the overall impression is less than inspiring, especially when the jerky scrolling kicks in.

DMA has, however, produced a very impressive game that pushes the technical limits of the PlayStation not in terms of the graphics, but in the area of game structure and design. In trusting to gameplay over graphics, DMA has also made quite a brave move, which should probably be applauded. *Grand Theft Auto* won't be for everyone, and it definitely requires a lot of effort from the player - the more you put into it, the more you get out. Provided you can live with its weaknesses, though, it's great fun, and truly huge in scope - no matter how long you play it for, there's always more to discover.

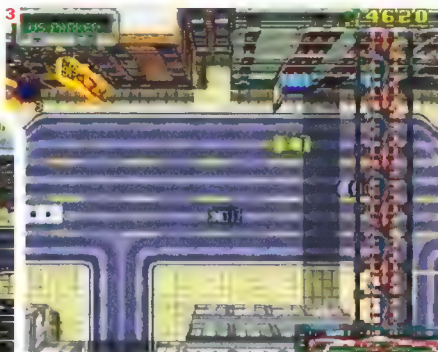
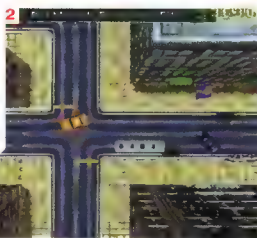
Daniel Griffiths



HA  
HA HA! WE'VE LOST  
'EM! WE'RE HOME FREE  
NOW!



**[1]** Yellow cabs are solid and fairly speedy vehicles. **[2]** The camera zooms out as you pick up speed.



# Grand Theft Auto



## VERDICT

GRAPHICS.

8

ORIGINAL RELEASE

Dec 1997

Violent, yes, and not to everyone's taste.

GAMEPLAY.

8

ORIGINAL SCORE

8

What you will find with GTA, though, is an original and deep game - although

LIFESPAN

7

DURABILITY:

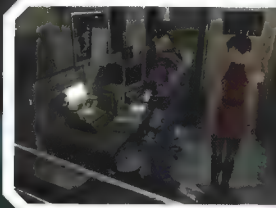
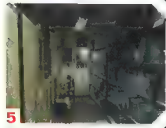
6

you may find it gets a tad repetitive.

Official UK  
**PlayStation**  
Platinum Special

OUT OF 10

[1] When you step through a door and there are zombies either side, you'd better be sure you've perfected your survive and shoot technique. [2] Leon and Ada save a game. [3] Be sure to examine objects you pick up. [4, 5] Yowch! Plants in the lab.



# Resident Evil 2

18

Could one of the greatest ever possibly be bettered? How about ramping up the

PlayStation adventures making it twice the size and gore count?



**I** magne a city overrun by zombies – walking dead who feast on still-warm corpses. A city with no police force left alive, a city in virtual ruins. Crashed vehicles litter the streets, flames lick at the crumbling stonework. Imagine that you are one of two survivors in that city and that you must fight your way out. As it says on the *Resident Evil 2* box: 'Welcome to the world of survival horror'.

In the game you choose to play one of two characters, either Leon the rookie cop, or Claire the, erm, 'articulate modern woman' (as she's described in the manual) who's looking for her brother. The action takes place in the third person – you see the character you are controlling – and is basically an old fashioned adventure game of the 'find locked door, find key, open locked door' style, spiced up with a few random monsters. That makes it sound a bit dull. On the contrary, *Resident Evil 2* is absolutely fantastic.

There is a stunningly well-created atmosphere that's on a par with that created in the very best horror movies. Skillfully selected camera angles enforce feelings of claustrophobia and paranoia on the player, sudden events paralyse you with fear and the whole game is riddled with hideous gore: zombies feeding on corpses, hideous monsters with misplaced organs, things in vats and all manner of foul, unholy abominations abound. In fact, given the broad nature of this magazine's readership, we're obliged to point out that if you are a) squeamish or b) very young, you won't enjoy *Resident Evil 2* at all. It will give you nightmares. Especially that bit when you blow a zombie in half and the bottom bit keeps walking while the top half comes crawling towards you. Shiver.







■ PUBLISHER:

Virgin

■ DEVELOPER:

Capcom

■ RELEASE DATE:

April 1998

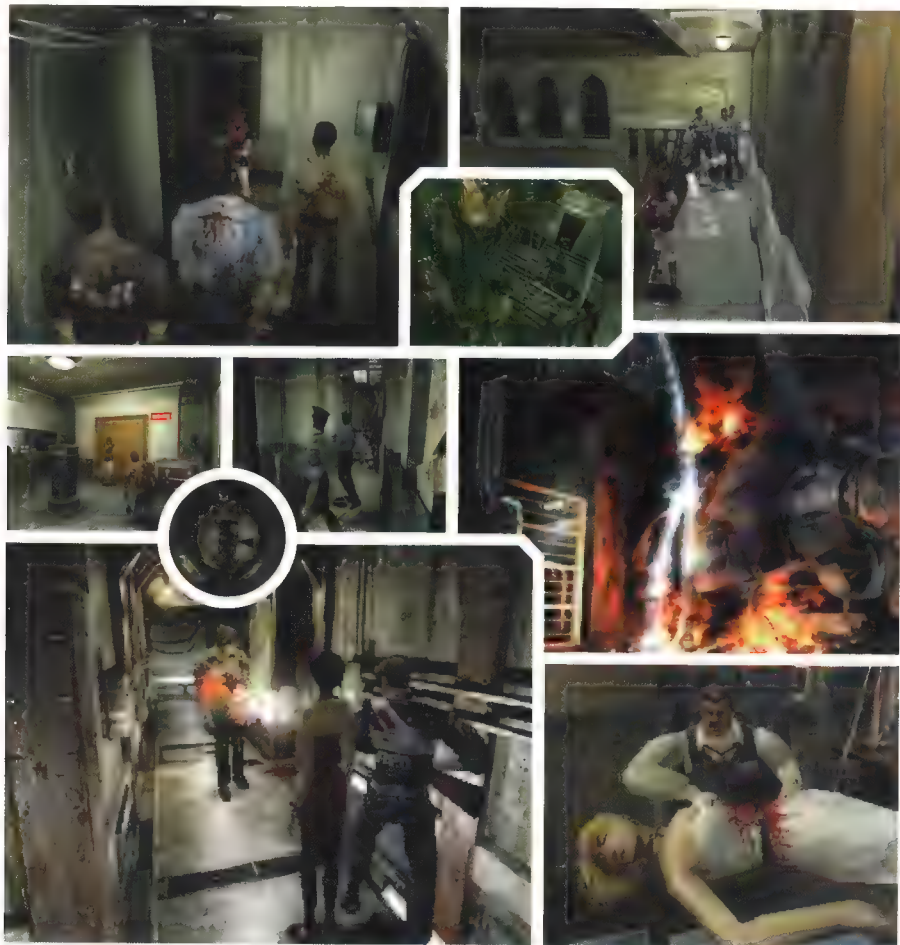
■ ORIGIN:

Japan

■ PRICE:

£19.99

■ STYLE: 3D horror action adventure



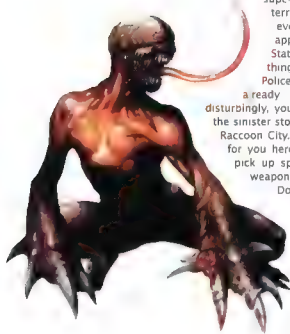
As you can see, *Resident Evil 2* is an absolutely stunning game to look at. The unrelentingly dark atmosphere pervades every section, and leaves you in no doubt that you are inside a frightening world where the survival of your sanity is at as much risk as your health. Probably the most disturbing thing of all is the legion of zombies, civilians and police that inhabit the game. It takes several shots from anything less powerful than a grenade launcher to put them down for good, making conservation of ammo a real problem. When you do run out (and you will), you'll soon pick up another essential area of expertise for survival: the art of running and dodging. Just try not to scream too loudly when you're playing - the neighbours might well call the police.

So what actually happens? Well, once you've chosen which character to play as, the game begins. You start off in the streets of Raccoon City, where the zombies are rife. Armed with just a knife and a small pistol with very limited ammunition, you must fight (or more likely run) your way past hordes of

superbly animated and absolutely terrifying monsters before you eventually find yourself in the apparent safety of the Police Station. This, however, is where things go from bad to worse. The Police Station, you discover, has already been totally overrun. More disturbingly, you begin to pick up clues as to the sinister story behind the zombification of Raccoon City. A story which we won't spoil for you here. More reassuringly, you also pick up spare ammunition and superior weaponry to help you on your quest.

Dotted along the way are several save points (rather cleverly disguised as typewriters) that you can use provided you have picked up an enabler (or ink-ribbon, as the game calls them).

Anyone who's played the original title (which had a similar plot based in a country house) will be immediately familiar with the



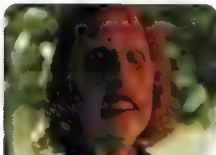
**[1] We're not going to tell you what this is. You'll just have to find out for yourselves...**

controls of *RE2*. Your character can walk, run, shoot and pick things up. In addition you can push certain objects aside and climb on to them. A significant difference is in the far greater number of monsters that can now appear on screen at any one time, which can help to make the odds seem overwhelmingly against you at times. The loading time between scenes is also much faster.

There are lots of puzzles to solve to help you proceed on your quest, but most of these are actually rather disappointing and don't require much thought - for the most part they act simply as plot devices to help the story move on. In fact, *RE2* is more like a movie than any other PlayStation game: from the camera angles to the heart-stopping action, from the interaction between characters to the complex plot and satisfying soundtrack, this is an engrossing experience that is as

**RE2 IS MORE LIKE A MOVIE THAN ANY OTHER GAME; THIS IS AN ENGROSSING EXPERIENCE THAT IS LIKE GOING TO THE CINEMA AS IT IS PLAYING A VIDEOGAME.**

## ROMERO AD SHOCKER



**L**ots of people noticed that *Resident Evil* owed a lot to the classic zombie films of George Romero (that's him, top left), so it was particularly good news to hear that Capcom, the Japanese developer, decided to honour its

debt to the horror-master by asking him to direct an advertisement for the sequel. Costing a staggering \$1.2 million, the advert was shot over two days and features Leon and Claire running through Raccoon City, pursued by hordes

of zombie cops. Unfortunately the ad was so gory that it never made it past British censors in our screens, thanks in no small part to the incredible make-up designed by SFX legend Screaming Mad George.

# Resident Evil 2

## THE SURVIVORS

**F**rom a city of thousands, only a handful of people survive... **LEON** is the rookie cop and one of the two fully playable characters. He thinks he's heading into work for an ordinary first day on the job, rescuing cats and fining speeding motorists. He's in for a rude awakening. **CLAIRE** is the other playable character. She's heading to Raccoon City to look for her brother, Chris, who's a member of the elite S.T.A.R.S. police SWAT team and one of the characters in the original game. **ADA** is also looking for someone - her boyfriend. He was a research scientist working on a mysterious project in Raccoon City, and now he's disappeared, too. **BRIAN** is the Chief of Police, and a man who knows too much. **SHERRY** is simply lost, and looking for her parents. Claire has to help her escape. **BEN** is a cynical journalist with a serious case of indigestion.



LEON



CLAIRE



ADA



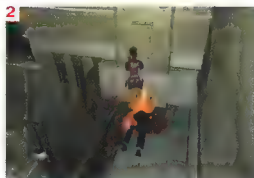
BRIAN



SHERRY



BEN



(1) Sherry'll take a bit of winning round before she'll trust anybody in this nightmare. Sensible girl. (2) 33 Some methods of zombie elimination work much better than others.

**RESIDENT EVIL 2 REEKS CLASS. IT IS HEAD AND SHOULDERS ABOVE MOST OF THE ADVENTURE GAMES FOR THE PLAYSTATION AND RANKS ALONGSIDE TOMB RAIDER...**

much like going to the cinema as it is playing a videogame.

Once you've completed the game with one character, you get to play again with the other. Both characters have specific storylines and explore slightly different areas of Raccoon City, although the core of the action and background remains the same for them both. One cunning touch is that the actions of one character will affect the story for the next. If Leon picks up a machine gun, for example, it won't be there for Claire when it's her turn later on.

As well as the two major protagonists, there's a big list of supporting characters - other survivors who impart important information or help during the quest. Two of these in particular - the love interest Ada for Leon and the small girl Sherry for Claire - also have a further function. At some points you actually get to control these two

characters when the main character is incapacitated or incapable, which is a very welcome twist.

There are also quite a few secrets dotted about *RE2*, mostly in the form of new rooms that can be discovered. These hold spare ammunition or other helpful stuff that isn't vital to the completion of the game. Apparently there's also a hidden character that can be accessed, providing that you complete the game quickly and well (and not in Easy mode, either). And although a criticism of the game is that it doesn't last all that long (reckon on about 10 to 15 hours to complete both characters the first time), the game does stand some replaying, especially as you try to get better and faster at completing it.

*Resident Evil 2* reeks class. It is head and shoulders above most of the adventure games for the PlayStation and ranks alongside *Tomb Raider* for its absolute 'through-the-screen' sense of involvement. It's a terrifying tribute to horror movies that sucks you into a dark and cynical world and only spits you out when you've defeated your own fear (as well as the big boss monster at the end, of course). Buy this game and enjoy the most thrilling, sweat-inducing gaming experience available on any machine.

Pete Wilton



### VERDICT

- GRAPHICS
- GAMEPLAY
- LIFESPAN:

- 10 ■ ORIGINAL RELEASE
- 10 ■ ORIGINAL SCORE
- 9 ■ DURABILITY:

- Apr 98
- 9
- 10

Yet another classic addition to the Platinum range. Beware though, you may like to stock up on clean undergarments before you start playing.

9

OUT OF 10

PlayStation  
Platinum Special



PlayStation!



**Tekken's sword wielding half-brother** is a quality beat 'em up, but is it the best a man can get? We join the quest of the mythical *Soul Blade* to see how it performs against the *Tekken* pacesetters...



**A**fter *Tekken 2* but before *Tekken 3*, Namco offered up this conversion of their arcade smash – a genetically modified *Tekken* engine with, as you've doubtless inferred from its title, several weapons bolted on. They're not all sharp, but they are all deadly. The big question is, how does it compare to its more famous cousins? Specifically, can it win a fight with its Platinum rival *Tekken 2*? From the top then.

The intro – which has to be in the *PlayStation* top five pre-rendered sequences – tells the tale of the legendary sword, *Soul Edge*, before leading you darkly into the action. According to myth, to hold the sword is to possess true power; many have tried to harness this power and many have perished.

Like all of Namco's fighting games, *Soul Blade* has a great range of characters, from the timid-but-dangerous Sophitia to the big-but-dim Rock, and each character



**Li Long is one of the best fighters in the game. Li Long is about to knock off Rock's head with one of his stunning kicks.**

ONE WONDERFUL ADDITION IS THE SIDESTEP... YOU CAN NEATLY DODGE YOUR OPPONENT'S ATTACK... LEAVING THEM OPEN TO A QUICK COUNTER.

has their own story. Li Long, for example, is a political assassin who was ordered by his Emperor to kill a pirate leader while secretly trying to find the precious *Blade* and avenge the murder of his love, Chie. So, following on from the intro you become increasingly immersed in the whole thing before even a punch is thrown. Wait for it... we'll get to the action soon.

When the game loads you're greeted by the familiar Options screen, except here there are even more choices than there were for *Tekken 2*. As well as the



*Soul Blade* features one of the best intros we've ever seen. It starts off impressively and just gets better as you're introduced to all of the fighters.



PUBLISHER:

Sony

DEVELOPER:

Namco

RELEASE DATE:

May 1997

ORIGIN:

Japan

PRICE:

£19.99

STYLE:

Weapons-based brawler

(1) Hwang performs a flashy special move on himself. (2) A map. (3) Each character has their own story. (4) Beat a fighter and steal their weapon. (5) More brutal violence as Li Long gets a pasting. (6) Siegfried vs Sophitia. (7) Sophitia proves size doesn't matter. (8) Messing about on the river. (9) Another lethal kick from Hwang. (10) Li Long really ought to give in now.



THE PRACTICE MODE IS MUCH MORE COMPREHENSIVE THAN IN *TEKKEN 2*, WITH YOUR OPPONENT BEING ABLE TO JUMP, SIDESTEP, ATTACK...

we've ever seen. Spend a few hours experimenting with it, and you'll be on your way to mastering the game.

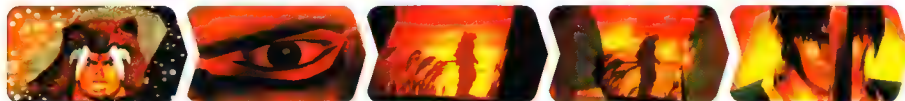
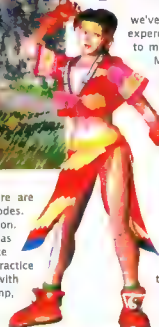
Most people, however, will choose to go straight to the Arcade option, where you are greeted with the 10 fighters including some splendid pugilists and a couple of duff ones, to boot. Taki and Li Long are probably best for the novice - they can both offer a great range of

kicks and attacks. But what about those attacks?

In general the controls are more traditional than in *Tekken The Triangle* and the Square buttons perform horizontal and

vertical attacks with your weapon, while the Circle button performs a variety of kicks. The other addition comes by way of a defence key: instead of stepping backwards to block your opponent, you now have to press the

usual Arcade and Versus modes, there are Battle, Team Battle and Time Attack modes. But most impressive is the Practice option. One of the (few) faults in *Tekken 2* was the limited moves that the practice dummy could make. In *Soul Blade* the Practice mode is much more comprehensive, with your opponent being able to jump, sidestep, attack, in fact do more or less anything. It's the best Practice mode



Our favourite scenes include the cornfield fight between Mitsurugi and three assassins, and Siegfried escaping the crumbling tower on horseback.

**Beat every other fighter  
and you'll be paired up to  
take on the top dog.**

**The psychedelic background has to be one of the strangest we've seen.**



**Soul Edge** has some of the nastiest specials to be found anywhere.



It takes a lot of craft to avoid Soul Edge when he launches his attacks.

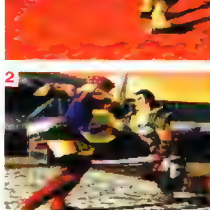


**Expect to see this a lot.**  
**Soul takes a lot of beating**  
**and even more practice.**



With all of these moves mastered, you must fight your way through the nine opponents and finally face the mighty Cervantes. When you play this character he seems a rather unwieldy, slow fellow but as soon as the computer gets hold of him, he becomes a fighter to fear. His double-sword technique proves very nice; it is impossible to break down and using your own weapon to guard against his attacks soon leaves you with a worn-out blade. If you do beat him, his bones dissemble into the spirit of Soul Edge and become another challenge altogether. Once you've beaten this skeletal swordsman you can

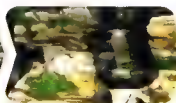
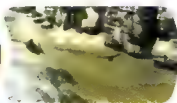
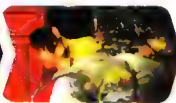
THE EDGE MASTER MODE, IN WHICH YOU CHOOSE A CHARACTER AND GUIDE THEM THROUGH A STORY... HELPS TO GIVE THE GAME LONGEVITY.



[1] Li Long gives Voldo a good crack with his nunchuks. [2] Sophitia has an uncanny knack of aiming for the nether regions [3] That's gotta hurt!

sit back and watch the ending. Namco have opted to use polygons instead of the usual CGI endings which gives them a rather basic look, but it somehow works.

The in-game graphics are quite wonderful. Each character is beautifully drawn and magnificently animated, the effects of sword meeting sword being especially praiseworthy. The backdrops are also much improved – we particularly enjoyed Li Long's arena where you fight on a raft, cascading down a flooded gully. In another change of direction, Namco placed the action in an arena environment where pugilists can be thrown or kicked out but can never fall out, as happens in more frustrating arena-based fighting titles,



The intro sets up all of the characters wonderfully. Li Long sails down the river, searching for the swine who killed his girlfriend, the beautiful Chie.



# Soul Blade

**[1]** The swords have lovely lighting effects. **[2]** Sophia gets cracked in the ribs from Suong Mi Na. **[3]** The sliding tackle works a treat. **[4]** Sophia has a nice lino in head locks



EACH CHARACTER IS BEAUTIFULLY DRAWN AND MAGNIFICENTLY ANIMATED, THE EFFECTS OF SWORD ON SWORD BEING ESPECIALLY PRAISEWORTHY.

One final addition worth a mention is the Edge Master mode in which you choose a character and guide them through a story. For instance, with Sophia you start the game in your home town in Greece, where the God of the Forge gives you a sword to help you battle for the Gods. Rather than simply fight as they do in Arcade mode, each fighter has to be defeated in a certain way - Voldo must be beaten by a continual stream of kicks and stabs, otherwise his energy is replenished. On other occasions you have to fight three fighters in succession with only one energy bar. This gives the game a real boost.

*Soul Blade* is a classy beat 'em up which unfortunately suffers from comparisons with *Tekken 2*. It doesn't quite have the depth of the *Tekken* series but the Edge Master mode helps to give it extra longevity. You can't fail to have fun with this game and it's heartily recommended to any cash-strapped beat 'em up fan who needs a fix until they can get hold of *Tekken 3* for £20 (see page 16 for details).

Pete Wilton



**[1]** Li Long gets loose with his nunchucks to great effect. **[2]** Sophia knocks out her alter ego with one of her sword combos.



## Siegfried

The tragedy of Siegfried is legendary. He slew his own father in battle and has sworn to avenge his death by finding Soul Edge and making him pay for his evil trickery.



## Mitsurugi

Known as 'The Great Swordsman of the Age' the farmer's son has had enough of his lands being ravaged and has decided it is better to raid than be raided. One of the best fighters.



## Cervantes

The great pirate was feared by all who sailed the Atlantic Ocean. Cervantes left on a voyage to find the Soul Blade but was attacked and disappeared, never to be seen again.



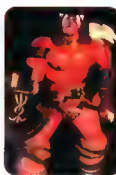
## Hwang

Born into a poor family, he began to study the martial arts after his parents died. Under the tuition of a great master, Hwang became a great warrior and set out to find Soul Edge.



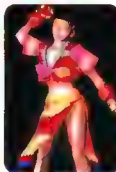
## Sophitia

Having received an oracle from the gods, Sophia was chosen to rid the world of the evil Soul Blade which sucks the pain and hatred from its victims to increase its power and evil.



## Rock

Born in England, he was bound for the New World when his ship was attacked by pirates. Fending for himself on a strange island he dreams of avenging his parents' murder.



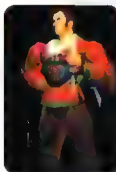
## Seung Mina

A Korean patriot who yearns for peace, yet is unable to fight for her country because of her sex. She sets off to find the Soul Blade in order to win the war for Korea.



## Voldo

Enclosed alive inside the treasure vault of his psychotic master, the Italian merchant Vercel. Voldo has been driven insane and has become blind through years in the darkness.



## Li Long

During a secret mission for the Emperor, Li Long heard his love, Chie, had been murdered by a mystery man and now lives for revenge and the hope of being reunited with her.



## Taki

Known as the Demon Hunter. Blessed with supernatural, she travels through Japan purging the lands of evil demons, looking for the Soul Blade to aid her in her challenge.

## VERDICT

GRAPHICS

9

ORIGINAL RELEASE

May 97

GAMEPLAY

8

ORIGINAL SCORE

9

LIFESPAN:

9

DURABILITY:

8

Not quite up to the standards of *Tekken 2* for, naturally, *Soul Blade* is still a brawl from the top drawer, and worth serious consideration at this price.

8

OUT OF 10

Official UK  
**PlayStation**  
Platinum Special

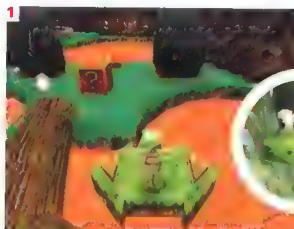
## INTRO



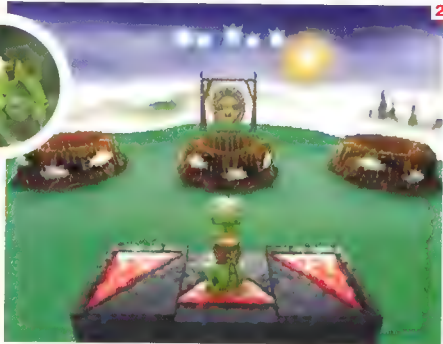
Welcome to the world of the Gobbos. In the sequence at the beginning of the game you follow the early part of Croc's life and watch as he acquires all

# Croc: Legend Of The Gobbos

With smooth-looking, finely detailed environments and abundant secret levels, *Croc* was lauded as a *Mario 64* for the PlayStation. Was this a classic case of hype over content, though?



[1] The ice levels. As well as having some great little graphical flourishes, they also look convincingly cold. Brrrr! [2] This is the great sheep sub-game. The more times you get it right, the more lives you can earn. Odd, but fun.



**Y**es, of course it was. Many were initially impressed with Fox's claim that, finally, the PlayStation was to have a 3D platformer of its very own... although it wasn't. Really. Okay, so the game looked suitably N64-esque and was so cartoony that it made Disney look dark and brooding, but it was also utterly tedious, far too difficult to complete and a bit of a swizz.

Croc puts you in control of our eponymous hero, and after watching the scene-setting intro **it's your job to travel around the six mythical worlds of the Gobbos and rescue them from the clutches of Baron Dante, the game's malevolent villain.**

Upon loading the game, the first thing that strikes you is its highly polished appearance. There's a real cartoon-like atmosphere, with brightly coloured levels realised in exceptional detail. The early forest stages have such a solid appearance, almost devoid of polygonal clipping, that they have you wanting to explore from every angle. Later levels, which are accessed by a map screen as you progress, are equally attractive. Many contain clever little flourishes, such as the transparent ice blocks and the way you leave footprints in the snow on the ice levels. Argonaut have also used Gouraud shading which, they claim, 'linearly interpolates the colour shade of one surface normal to other adjacent connected surface normals'. Translated into English, this basically means that when Croc is standing next to lava, for instance, he'll glow a shade of red as if

the lava were illuminating him.

Our equally impressive hero, made up of some 200 polygons, can perform a number of different manoeuvres which he does in his own charming style. The way he jumps, tail-swipes, hangs on to platforms, swims, pushes blocks, backs up, flips and climbs walls have all been animated superbly.

The sound complements the gameplay, too. Gone are the repetitive dirges of platformers past. *Croc* contains two hours of original music, some of which is really rather good, especially the salsa tunes on the desert levels. Croc also has a smattering of speech which accompanies his tail-attack. Apart from that, the sound effects are quite sparse, with only the Dantinis (Dante's little helpers) making sound of any note, giggling just before they attack. More chirps and other speech would have been nice.





PUBLISHER

Fox Interactive

DEVELOPER

Argonaut

RELEASE DATE

August 1997

ORIGIN

UK

PRICE

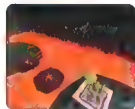
£19.99

STYLE

3D platformer



of the skills which you'll be using in the game. It's not long before Baron Dante puts an end to the Gobbos' idyllic existence, leaving you to rescue them.



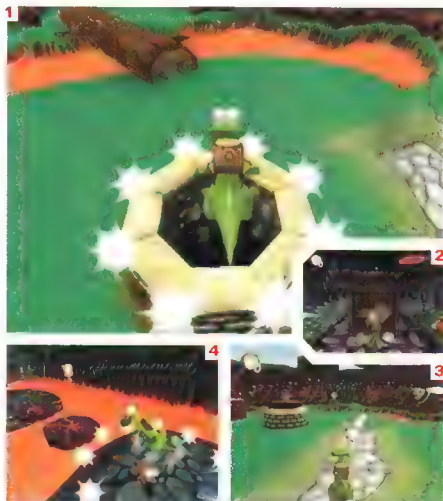
In his bid to rescue the Gobbos, Croc must undertake the usual platform shenanigans. Collecting 100 crystals and discovering hearts gain him extra lives. **Jumping on boxes reveals their contents**, jumping on switches make platforms appear, and so on. But Croc also contains new elements, such as platforms which can be made to float in any direction, balloon lifts and levels that are enshrouded in darkness. Some also require a certain amount of swimming, but generally these underwater areas are relatively uneventful and easy to complete.

There are numerous ways to unlock bonus levels and secret areas. As well as the normal white crystals you'll find special coloured ones which, when gathered, will allow admittance to the said secret areas through special doors. Finding these crystals is the hard part, though. Sometimes they're disguised as normal gems, at other points they may be secreted in some far flung corner of the level. There are also wells which you can stomp open to access extra areas.

At the end of each group of levels you're pitted against an end-of-level boss. These take the form of magically mutated inhabitants of the Gobbos' world and as you enter the boss level, you're treated to a small FMV sequence which shows the dastardly Dante mutating the creatures. Completing the early levels is disappointingly easy, as you only need to race to the end of the level to tall-swipe the gong (the goal of each level). However the real challenge comes from completing the levels, collecting all the captured Gobbos, then defeating the boss. This, in turn, opens up a secret level which contains a piece of a jigsaw puzzle; find all the pieces and a whole new stand appears, adding longevity to an already huge game.

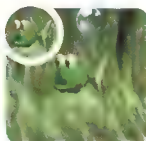
Slightly more attractive at just 20 quid, Croc hasn't aged particularly well. As a benchmark for others to follow, it did an adequate job, but two years is a long time in computer entertainment and things have moved on in such a way that Croc now looks very dated indeed.

Andy Butcher



[1] With a hearty 'Wazam!' Croc enters a hidden level. [2] Pushing blocks is sometimes paramount to the successful completion of certain levels. [3] The first level and really nothing more than a training level. It introduces you to most of the elements you'll find throughout the game. [4] A Gobbo.

## THE BOSSES



**A**t the end of each set of levels, you're treated to a small FMV sequence which shows Dante mutating the innocent inhabitants of the Gobbos' world into one larger boss. If you're skilful enough with the pad and have an idea of what to do, they're pretty easy to defeat - although the fish-boss proves to be a frustrating adversary. Watch out for his fireballs and keep using the flip button. Remember... YOU ARE CLEVER!

### VERDICT

GRAPHICS

7

ORIGINAL RELEASE

Aug 97

Nippy on its release, Croc now appears

GAMEPLAY

5

ORIGINAL SCORE

7

lean, hungry likes of Ape Escape and

LIFESPAN

6

DURABILITY

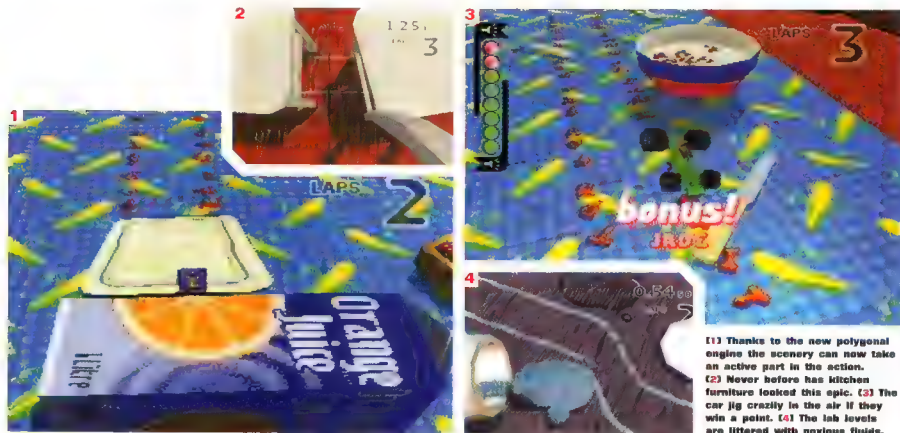
4

Spyro The Dragon.

Official UK  
**PlayStation**  
Platinum Special

**5**  
OUT OF 10





[1] Thanks to the new polygonal engine the scenery can now take an active part in the action. [2] Never before has Kitchen furniture looked this epic. [3] The car jig crazily in the air if they win a point. [4] The lab levels are littered with noxious fluids.

## Micro Machines v3

After a series of delays *Micro Machines v3* finally appeared

In 1997. Codemasters claimed they were getting the gameplay just right. Strangely, they weren't lying...



**T**hanks to our frighteningly effective market research, and you bothering us on the blower, we know that for a sizeable minority of you, the PlayStation is your first console. Frankly, you don't know you're born. But as well as missing out on blocky graphics and beepy music, many of you have missed the founding of one of the oddest videogame dynasties yet seen.

When little-known outfit Codemasters first announced that they'd obtained an exclusive licence from the manufacturers of *Micro Machines*, most of the world failed to notice. Those of us who did weren't dancing in the aisles at the thought of a game based on the smallest, most useless toy cars ever produced. As it turned out, we should have been.

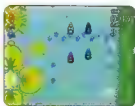
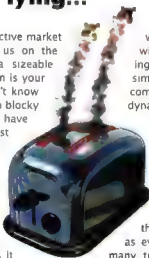
The games featured mediocre graphics, very poor characters and strictly functional production values all round. At best they looked cheap 'n' cheerful. But what they lacked in Ferrero Rocher ambassadonal sophistication, they more than compensated for with great bucketloads of gameplay – particularly in multi-player format.

The next big question asked of Codemasters was

whether the leap to PlayStation could be made without sacrificing the magical mystery ingredient. Could the gameplay remain as simplistically engaging but infuriatingly compulsive as before? Would the *Micro Machines* dynasty finally fall in the brave new 3D world that it had been dragged into?

Well, we weren't about to make the same mistake twice – if you'd come to our office then you'd have seen us jiving around the pews at the very thought of another 'go' on this superb game. The driving feel is the same as ever. The various vehicles still handle differently, but they all have the same intuitive-but-loose feel as ever, and chucking them around the game's many tight corners is still a joy. Better still, the

The various vehicles all have the same intuitive-but-loose feel as ever... Better still, the multi-player game is as good as it's ever been





PUBLISHER

Codemasters

DEVELOPER

In-house

RELEASE DATE

April 1997

AGE RESTRICTION

None

PRICE

£20

STYLE

Cartoon racer

There are bumps which affect the handling of your wheels, proper jumps... and impressive perspective changes

multi-player game is as good as it's ever been. Bloody good, in other words.

Some brilliant thinking way back when did away with the need for split screens, link-ups and turns. In a multi-player game you're all on the same screen at the same time. If you fall behind, you disappear. If you're in front, you don't. The last person driving takes a point from the first player to disappear, and if anyone reaches eight points, they win. Or if the race finishes before any player wins outright, the player with the most points wins. Simple, yes. Effective, yes. Fun? Christ yes. The combination of racing, nudging and, thanks to new power-ups, destruction of your peers is simply unbeatable.

Amazingly, Codemasters managed to retain *Micro Machines*' cute-as-a-bunny appeal while making the graphics genuinely impressive. Never before have breakfast tables, beach rugs and school desks been represented in such a swooping, epic manner.

The power of your PlayStation has freed up the camera and allowed true 3D courses. The third dimension isn't just a cosmetic

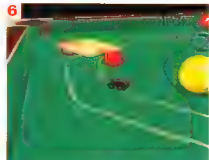
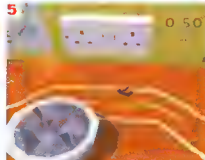
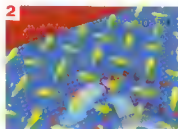
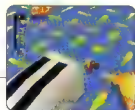
addition, either. There are bumps which affect the handling of your wheels of choice, proper jumps to be made, plenty of switches of level and impressive perspective changes.

What *Micro Machines v3* can also brag about is its many imaginative set pieces. In many races there are sections of track that separate this from all other racing games, breaking up the rapid gameplay without disrupting the feverish momentum. When was the last time *Ridge Racer* challenged you to climb a tight and slidey sandcastle, for instance? And has *Wipeout* ever required that you be sucked through laboratory equipment, boiled, fried, processed and spat out the other end?

If there is a quibble to be made with *MM v3*, it's that the camera can sometimes be a little too mobile. In one-player mode it very occasionally takes up wilfully obscure angles, making the already tough later races frustrating, while in multi-player mode the leader can be so close to the edge of the screen that any turns tend to come as an unpleasant shock.

We have no time for such nit-picking, however - it's just our job. With the aid of plenty of hindsight we can now categorically state that you'll struggle to acquire this many bucketloads of multi-player racing fun for £45 of your earth pounds (although *Supersonic Racers* makes a strong claim), let alone the measly £20 you'll now require.

Steve Bradley



(1) Turning into a fireball can be a frightening experience for your competitors, but it's a far from simple process steering it. You can't see which way you're pointing. (2) You should be able to take this corner at full speed. (3) The toaster on the floor pops you up on to the table. (4) A hook becomes both a tunnel and hump bridge on this course. (5) The trucks are particularly good fun. (6) As are the 4x4s.

## VERDICT

GRAPHICS

8

ORIGINAL RELEASE

Apr 97

GAMEPLAY

9

ORIGINAL SCORE

9

LIFESPAN

9

DURABILITY

9

With gameplay this pure the passage of time is largely irrelevant. *MM v3* can hold its own against the latest racers in terms of multi-player fun. And then some.

9  
OUT OF 10

Official UK  
**PlayStation**  
Platinum Special Edition

# PLAYERS!



(1) This game has a big, pink chopper. No, really. (2) *Revolution's* signature is this palm-lined beach road. Mico. (3) The 'now and improved' powerslide is now even more difficult to master. Cheers, Namco.



# Ridge Racer Revolution

Namco's follow-up to its original racing sim took a decent stab at creating something different.

But was it really worth this second trip?



What an idyllic scene. The sun glinting through the windscreen, the golden sands, the green palms, the emerald ocean, the grey, arm, tarmac... Yes.

**O**ur first impressions of *Revolution* were ones of disappointment. Rather than a major overhaul of *Ridge Racer*, this is clearly more of the same – the new course is still undeniably *Ridge Racer*-esque (cityscape, bridges, beach, tunnels), the same line-up of racing cars is in evidence and although substantially re-mixed, it sounds not dissimilar to the original.

Also, another major gripe – is that *Revolution* is a lot tougher than before, due to the annoyingly twisty-turny nature of the course and the more aggressive drivers. Make no mistake, this track is as wine – full of sharp bends, narrow lanes and unforgiving chicanes. There are precious few straights where you can let rip and even then you only get a brief moment of full-on acceleration before you have to slam on the anchors again only to make the next corner.

Apart from a short beachfront lined with nothing but palm trees, the roadway is generally enclosed on both sides. This means that scenery pop-up is pretty much eradicated, but it also makes things a tad







PUBLISHER:

SCEE

DEVELOPER:

Namco

RELEASE DATE

November 1995

ORIGIN:

Japan

PRICE

£19.99

STYLE:

Driving

(1) The rear-view mirror is absolutely vital given the increased competitiveness of the *Revolution* racers. (2) Dark spooky tunnel. Don't stop the car and get out. (3) The enormous monitor – partially obscured by the mirror – displays old Namco characters like Pac-Man and Mappy.



claustrophobic – and the extended course which snakes through a mini-canyon is even worse.

The narrowness of the road and the increased resilience of the competitors means that overtaking can be a painful process. And remember that you only have to touch the car in front or the trackside scenery, and your speed goes through the floor, leaving you trailing behind until the next decent overtaking place. An unsuccessful passing manoeuvre can screw up your chances of crossing the line in first position.

Namco has even committed the ultimate sin of fiddling with the powerside. After struggling manfully with, and finally mastering, powersliding around bends, we now find that the slightest on-off-on with the gas

and you're sent into an uncontrollable prouette. Dammit.

So, it's crap then? Ah. Well, this is where it gets tricky. You see, *Revolution* is undoubtedly a poor sequel, but as you play, it slowly becomes clear that this was more than a swift cash-in. A lot of thought has gone into the design and structure of the game, not least of which is the extensive options, which allows you to play in a variety of cars, at different speeds, in a variety of races, over different difficulty levels. It's a minor plus point, but if you multiply all the separate options there are well over 1200 permutations in car/race/course/transmission options – and that's not counting the hidden cars and tricks you can access with the correct pad combinations!

What you do get for your money is more of an undeniably great game, and this alone will probably be enough for most gamers. You get a new course, you get two new cars – the 13th Racing Kid coupé and the White Angel car – you get a bigger range of game tweaks, you get 12 different endings (allegedly) and there's also a wealth of hidden stuff for you to find and fiddle with. It's also a lot faster than before, and the 3D graphics seem to be slightly more robust.

But, most importantly, *Revolution* is a really stiff challenge. No one but the sternest of high scorers could argue that this was an easy game.

Having completed the original on both Japanese and UK versions, your correspondent happily breezed through Novice, struggled slightly on Advanced and then got completely trashed on Expert, being unable to better third place for an awfully long time. The 'Extra' backward tracks merely rubbed the salt in.

Completing *Revolution* is no breeze; but the problem for us is that it's not that enjoyable either. The whole feel of the game is of cold aggression – the graphics are steel grey, the computer-controlled competition is utterly merciless, and that bloody, bleeding commentator does nothing to alleviate the feeling that everyone in the game is out to get you. Sorry, Namco, but it just isn't FUN. With *Gran Turismo* and *Colin McRae Rally* taking their places at the head of the Platinum racing grid, and the inclusion of *Ridge 1* with *Ridge Racer 4*, *Revolution* looks to have run its course and can now only really be considered a curiosity or final desperate fix for the *Ridge* fixated.

Will Groves

## Race tracks

*Revolution* includes a whole host of new tracks, including re-makes of the originals. The full track list is as follows.

- 01 Drive J 2 Dance
- 02 Gap
- 03 Over The Highway
- 04 ...Dat Dan Day... A
- 05 Jords Of Techno
- 06 Maximum Zone
- 07 Bare Hero 2
- 08 Feeling Over Kermis
- 09 Rotterdam Nation 94
- 10 Speedster Overhaul
- 11 Rhythmic Shift Revolve



## RIDGE RACER - RALLY X STYLE



**S**hould you destroy all of the *Galaga* '86 ships using less than 44 shots, you get to play an arranged version of the game, featuring cute *Rally-X*-style buggies! It may look like a gimmick, but it does afford you more room on the road to pass the other cars.

### VERDICT

GRAPHICS

8

ORIGINAL RELEASE:

Nov 95

GAMEPLAY

8

ORIGINAL SCORE:

8

LIFESPAN

9

DURABILITY

7

A fair update, but with *Ridge Racer 4*, and its free copy of the original thrown in, possessed by all but the few, it all seems rather pointless now.

7  
OUT OF 10

PlayStation  
Platinum Special

PlayTest

# Time Crisis

Guns! Big guns! Huge bloody great guns that leave holes the size of dinner plates in people! Catharsis? Thy name is G-Con...

[1] Richard Miller, [Big] Gun For Hire. [2] Take out the explosive crate on the forklift to clear the level double-quick. [3, 4] Shields or not, the words 'sitting' and 'ducks' come to mind. [5, 6] You can run but you can't hide. Actually, you can hide but it won't do any good [7] And apparently, they do get Prodigy in Japan...



Welcome to the best shoot 'em up partnership since Smith and Wesson - *Time Crisis* and Namco's G-Con 45. Yet another one of Namco's sublime arcade games, *Time Crisis* is the Tokyo company's answer to the *Lethal Enforcers/Virtue Cop* trend for lightgun-driven shoot 'em ups. Nasty man appear on the screen? Blow him away with the unerringly-accurate plastic revolver in your hands and through the wonders of technology, feel the recoil as your virtual bullet hurtles screenward. Top fun - but that was the arcades and despite the PlayStation's undoubted loveliness, what chance does the smooth-scrollin' *Time Crisis* have of surviving any conversion intact? Not much.

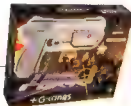
But converted it has been and despite the type of odds which are usually insurmountable, what a job. Fair enough, those

graphics couldn't hope to stand up to the original (Propellerheads note: Namco's arcade machines use a System 22 board while the PlayStation only has a System 11) but as for gameplay, speed and downright addictiveness? Well, they've all made the trip PlayStation-wards and, give or take the odd glitch, the results are just dandy. Playing the role of special agent Richard Miller, your job is to rescue the President's daughter from the heinous clutches of various nutjobs. As jobs go, it's not too complicated - fill everyone in the vicinity with as much lead as possible - but as the scenarios become more complex and gameplay snowballs into fresh levels of toughness, more subtle methods of destruction must be found. Facing the music and spraying the room with bullets might be ideal for dealing with the chumps who populate Stage One's underground factory, but such tactics will earn you a knife in the face when up against

Stage Two's arch-villain, Sherudo Caro Memory card or not, not too pleasant an experience

So how does one go about such a carnagefest?

That's where the G-Con comes in. One pan free





PUBLISHER:

Sony

DEVELOPER:

Namco

RELEASE DATE:

January 1998

AGE RESTRICTION:

None

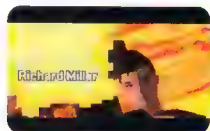
PRICE

£19.99

STYLE:

Light-gun shooter

## WOO BANG CLAN



Leave the G-Con 45 alone, sit back and watch *Time Crisis*' trailer sequence. With widescreen graphics and those *Pulp Fiction*-esque captions, TC transforms into James Bond as directed by John Woo. And as a beginner's guide for who to shoot (the nutters) and who to snog (the girl), it's just dandy...

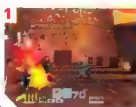
alignment sequence swiftly out of the way and it's time to see whether Namco has made good on its promise for improved accuracy. Praise be, then, for as your first bullet rips the kneecap off a hapless stooge and your second has somewhat predictably decreased the baby-making prowess of the hotel porter, Namco has delivered. As with the arcade version, you must avoid enemy fire and reload your weapon by ducking behind a nearby doorway or car. In the arcades, that meant stabbing a foot pad, but at home you can either use the button at the bottom of the barrel or by plugging a joy pad into port 2 and laying it on the floor, tap the X button with your foot. The more jammy PlayStation owner can also use the foot pedal of any steering wheel peripheral but all work equally as well. And what top laffs it all

is. One bullet might be enough to sink most on-screen baddies but empty a full clip into a corpse and rather than simply lie there, the lifeless cadaver will breakdance across the floor, topple off a walkway or just gain a bit posthumous (lead) weight. Not the cleverest thing for upping for your accuracy stats but as empty bullet cases zing off from the bottom of the screen and the gameplay doubles, just another bloody-but-perfect example of the attention to graphical detail that so endears *Time Crisis*.

But for all its tactical juggling *Time Crisis* simply involves shooting a plastic gun at a screen and watching men fall down. True, there's a Time Attack mode where, with unlimited lives, you must complete stages as fast as inhumanly possibly but essentially it's still the same game played out with the same characters.

What rescues *Time Crisis*, however, is the truly amazing gameplay that makes it the best game that involves shooting a plastic gun at a screen and watching men fall down. It's about as close to balls-out arcade action as any PlayStation game has yet to get.

Dean Mortlock



(1-3) While *Time Crisis*' shoot 'em up action errs on the repetitive, its scenes don't - and that can mean anything from hotel lobbies and ninja hideouts to Bond-style secret laboratories. Wherever you go though, there's sure to be a nutter waiting...



### VERDICT

GRAPHICS

8

ORIGINAL RELEASE

Jan 97

GAMEPLAY

8

ORIGINAL SCORE

8

LIFESPAN

7

DJRAB LITY

8

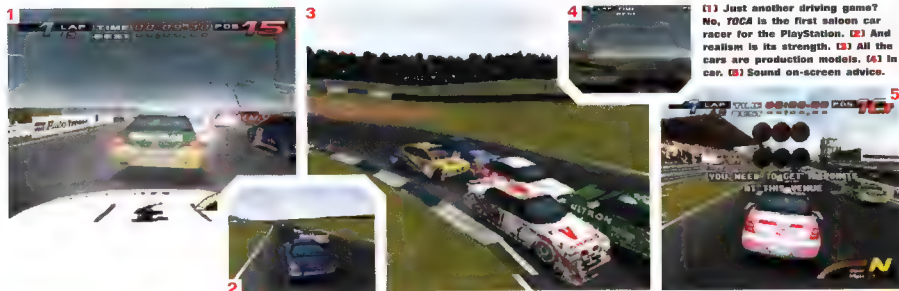
Although this will cost you well over £20 once you consider the cost of a G-Con, you should still seriously consider it, especially if you have *Point Blank*.

7  
OUT OF 10

Official UK PlayStation Platinum Special



# PlayStation!



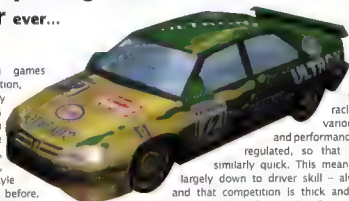
# TOCA Touring Car Championship

We've seen simulations of just about every competitive motor vehicle event known to man, **bar tractor pulling**. Codemasters spent 1997 producing what it reckoned was the **finest touring car racer ever...**



**W**ith all the racing games available on PlayStation, you might wonder why software companies keep churning them out by the truckload. In the case of Codemasters and its game, *TOCA Touring Car Championship*, the answer was simple - this style of racing hadn't been covered before, and it's ideal for computer gaming.

Touring Car racing is the British equivalent of the American *NASCAR* competition. What makes it almost unique, though, is that the cars are production models from major car manufacturers - externally identical to the ones we mortals drive around the roads. On the inside, of course, it's a different story. The engines have been tuned and modified, and the structure strengthened with roll cages. This is one factor that gives *TOCA* much



of its appeal. The other is the style of the racing involved. The various cars' specs and performance are very closely regulated, so that they're all very similarly quick. This means that victory is largely down to driver skill - always a bonus - and that competition is thick and fast, with cars bunched up closely, all struggling for position. Car to car contact is common and spectacular spins, skids, and crashes frequent. Because of the (relatively) low speeds and toughness of the cars, though, these are rarely

The cars are production models from major car manufacturers - externally identical to the ones we mortals drive



(1) You can expect to get involved in some spectacular pile-ups at times.  
(2) Car-to-car contact often occurs because the cars have slower speeds.



PUBLISHER

Codemasters

DEVELOPER

In-house

RELEASE DATE

November 1997

ORIGIN:

UK

PRICE

£19.99

STYLE:

Racing simulation

1) The circuits have been designed to be as realistic as possible. The course data came from Ordnance Survey maps. 2) Check out the Audi. The car handling is phenomenal. 3) TOCA is a aim to match F1 '97. 4) Even the skids are fun.



The graphics are fast, detailed and liberally peppered with neat effects, and the sound is among the best to grace a racing sim.

disastrous, with cars normally carrying on racing. The question, then, is why has it taken so long for a computer game based on Touring Car racing to appear?

Fortunately, TOCA easily lives up to the potential offered by the sport. The graphics are fast, and detailed, although they are starting to show their age when compared to the excellent TOCA 2, and the sound is amongst the best to grace a racing sim, with excellent engine noises and spot effects. Likewise, presentation is of a high quality, with a simple menu system and nice touches like pre- and post-race commentary from Tiff Needell of Top Gear fame.

What really makes TOCA Touring Car Championship, though, is its attention to detail, accuracy, and realism - all of which contribute to the game's superb playability. The game features all eight teams and courses from the 1997 season. All the cars were laser-scanned to produce 3D graphics accurate to within millimetres. Likewise, the basic course data came from 3D models supplied by Ordnance Survey - the graphics were then designed from videotapes and photographs of the tracks.

Even more impressive is the accuracy and realism of the cars' handling. TOCA features some of the most complex physics models to appear in any driving game, calculating the inertia and momentum of each car, its centre of gravity and effect on the suspension, and the grip and traction of each wheel independently. The superb in-car view uses the same information to calculate the forces acting on the driver's head, and thus the movement of the car around him.

All of this is backed up by one of the most impressive AI routines we've ever seen in a PlayStation racing simulation. Each is rated in many different areas, which work in combination with the aforementioned physics model to determine their actions in the race. The system does work - TOCA features some of the most convincingly 'human' opponents you'll ever race, to the extent that they even remember the actions of other drivers. Run a car off the road in one race, and in the next they'll still be holding the grudge.

The end result is an excellent racing sim that plays like a dream because the cars drive like the real thing. The other drivers provide stiff opposition, so you get real satisfaction from passing them and the different tracks ensure a lasting challenge. It may not look like much these days but TOCA is still an enthralling PlayStation driving experience.

Steve Faragher



## WHAT ARE YOU DRIVING THESE DAYS?



One of the unique features of The TOCA Touring Car Championship is that the cars involved in the racing are production models - the sort of thing that people drive around the streets all the time. At least they are on the outside. On the inside they have been tuned and modified for a frighteningly fast experience. This is one of the reasons Touring Car racing is so popular.

### VERDICT

|          |   |                  |        |
|----------|---|------------------|--------|
| GRAPHICS | 8 | ORIGINAL RELEASE | Nov 97 |
| GAMEPLAY | 9 | ORIGINAL SCORE   | 9      |
| LIFESPAN | 8 | DURABILITY       | 8      |

Not as good looking as *McRae* or *GT*. Not, in fact, quite as good, but beneath its dowdy exterior TOCA has the heart of a serious, superbly involving sim.

9  
OUT OF 10

Official UK  
PlayStation  
Platinum Special



[1] It's Nakatomi Plaza and Bruce is rampaging through the building. [2] If you chuck grenades at the cars, they explode. Not surprisingly.

[3] Explosions. Splendid things. Here's one we prepared earlier. [4] Move down and right a bit. [5] For a jet we thought that was a Cola thingy.



# Die Hard Trilogy

Wouldn't it be **smart**, right, if you were famous and you could wear string vests and kill people at work? Imagine that. Anyway, here's **Die Hard Trilogy**...



ne of the first Platinum releases, *Die Hard Trilogy* remains as fresh and playable as when it was first released. As the game's split up into three chapters, it seems more sensible to take each game separately. So...

## Die Hard - Nakatomi Plaza

Let's start at the very beginning. A very good place to start. In the first film, John gets all hot under the collar after he's gone to pick up The Missus from work, only to find that a gaggle of international terrorists have gone and taken over the multi-storey building and are demanding all kinds of things. Tsk tsk. Sleigh bells are ringing, it's almost Christmas - the things a

regular fellow has to do. So Bruce, sorry, John has 15 levels of the skyscraper to tackle in 3D walkaround fashion, rescuing hostages and blowing away the fearsome criminals. And it all begins in the underground car park.

The viewed-from-above-and-behind (third person) perspective is quite odd but you soon become accustomed to it. You even fail to notice that John runs and jumps in a ridiculous (imagine Larry Grayson running amok through the *Generation Game* studio with a machine gun) manner after a while. In fact, this section is all rather fun, particularly when you discover that dapping the shoulder buttons makes you roll across the floor like Starsky and Hutch. And that you can shoot

## DIET LORD RETURNS WITH A VENGEANCE



[1] It's the Nakatomi Plaza again, a swooping helicopter and lots of explosions. Oh, and it's *Die Hard*.

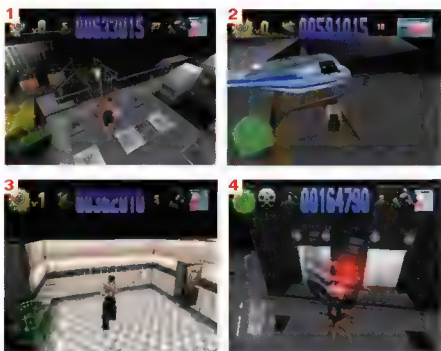
[2] Time for *Die Harder* at Bullies Airport. It looks anything but Bullies, here. Bruce? Quick, the runway!

[3] Oh, gadzooks. It's *Die Hard With A Vengeance*. Clunk click, every trip. Then hang, by the looks of things.





**PUBLISHER:** Fox Interactive **DEVELOPER:** Probe  
**RELEASE DATE:** August 1996 **ORIGIN:** UK  
**PRICE:** £19.99 **STYLE:** Arcade adventure



(1) Caught by the fuzz. Ouch. Bruce feels the force of laser upon vest.  
 (2) No, you can't fly the helicopter. It's there to transport the hostages.  
 (3) The urinals are only really there for decoration - only I'd like to visit the house of the freak who decorates their house with urinals. (4) The squeamish will be pleased to learn that bodies melt into the floor after a while.

glass panes for no reason other than to hear the strangely-satisfying tinkling crash sound.

There's some clever technical stuff going on here, too. The writers have developed a 'vanishing wall' technique which allows the gamer to see straight through walls so he never loses sight of the action. The villains are denoted as red dots on an on-screen map, so you're never surprised by anybody. They can't hide through transparent walls, after all. And they're not the brightest rogues you'll ever meet, often wandering away from you, backs turned, while you blast from the rear. Still, you'd have no chance if they ganged up because there's loads of them knocking about.

Despite the aforementioned reservation, the Nakatomi Plaza section is action-packed gunfoleary, a fine jaunt through a tower block.

#### Die Harder - Dulles Airport

Not quite as the name suggests. The terrorists are once again behaving very badly, refusing to say 'please' or 'thank you' in the airport Sock Shop. This is a *Time Crisis*-style affair which sees you negotiating a crosshair over fiendish foe and, well, just about anything you care to shoot. Your journey takes you from airport concourse to runway and beyond - you may even get to ride the snowmobile and fly the helicopter, and hopefully stop the cheeky little scamps from blowing up aeroplanes.

Once again, the order of the day is wanton destruction, with members of the public dashing around hysterically while you cut them to the ground just for a laugh. It's a mite easier using a mouse, but these games are obviously better played with one of those ridiculously chunky light guns. It takes a while to get used to the controls if you're playing with a joystick, but you can fiddle with the options to speed up the crosshair

Nakatomi Plaza is rather fun, particularly when dapping the shoulder buttons make you roll across the floor like Starsky and Hutch

movement. The more patient will bide their time and shoot to kill the terrorists, others will blast with abandon. Again, this is a frolic - one of the few decent I gunsight games for the PlayStation and, if it were a larger, plausible fare in its own right. With power-ups hidden all over the place, the onus is on your good self to blast the monkeys out of everything.

**Die Hard With A Vengeance - New York**  
 Another day, another adventure. Drive time USA, through the streets of the Big Apple commandeering cars on every block, handbraking around corners... and crashing horribly.

The most difficult aspect of the driving is getting your head around the controls, with shoulder buttons providing 90 degree and 180 degree turns, a turbo and brake button and, erm, a horn to honk. You can swap cars at parking lots dotted around the streets - the idea here is that from starting in a taxi, you can gradually upgrade to faster, more manoeuvrable models. So if you commandeer a cop car, the sound of the siren warns jaywalkers off. If you mash through pedestrians, blood splatters the windscreens and your wipers politely spread it across the screen to quickly clear the view.

The car mechanics work fine once you've gotten used to the fact that a gentle nudge is all you need to steer the car past barriers. It's *ESPN Extreme Games* married to *Driver*.

*Die Hard Trilogy* is a game which initially seems somewhat ragged and rather confusing, but there is more than enough in here to warrant a fairly sexual connection between game and 20 Pound note. You can play bits of each game at a time and save them to memory card, and with perseverance, all three sections are rewarding. No, it isn't the flashiest fare, nor is it the cleverest, but heckers, it's fun. And that's what counts. Jimminy, a decent movie licence. What WILL they think of next?

Daniel Griffiths



## WITHOUT WALLS



(1) The neat thing in *Without Walls* is the way the walls disappear so that the gamer can always see what's going on. (2) And what with a map hanging about in the bottom left-hand corner, you're always a fair idea of who's lurking around the corner. (3) John, leave him. He's dead. (4) You can shoot most of the flimsier walls.

#### VERDICT

|          |   |                  |        |
|----------|---|------------------|--------|
| GRAPHICS | 8 | ORIGINAL RELEASE | Aug 96 |
| GAMEPLAY | 9 | ORIGINAL SCORE   | 8      |
| LIFESPAN | 8 | DURABILITY       | 9      |

Official UK PlayStation Platinum Special

A sparkling diamond in the rough of licensed gaming. Although only average graphically, the gameplay simply shines out of every orifice.

8 OUT OF 10

PlayStation

# Total Drivin'

**Total Drivin'** reinvented the wheel – it was the first playstation racing game with actual round wheels, as opposed to polygonal ones. On the other hand, who cares?



(1) Hit the walls and really watch the sparks fly (well, you can just see 'em), (2) Scenery looks good, though not in split-screen mode (3) Although it's easy to drive from 'behind the wheel', the chase mode gives a good view of the road. (4) Now there's a surprise for a race game – tunnels. (5) Ending up the wrong way. Again.



**T**otal Drivin' blends not one, not two, but five different classes of car, each of which races around appropriate track styles. But, as the adage goes, you can be a jack of all trades and master of none. So to what extent does this saying apply to Total Drivin'? Let's take each of the car types in some approximation of order...

The race cars are the most disappointing. Although the sense of speed is there, the cars handle a little too easily. Even when you get through the first course and on to the second, which is raced in the rain. The cars turn sharply (especially when using the 'hard turn' buttons on the shoulders of the pad) and spin-

**Total Drivin'** blends not one, not two, but five different classes of car, each of which races around appropriate track styles

outs are difficult to achieve unless you're really driving like a nutter

The reverse applies when you progress on to the Indy cars. Not a million miles away from Formula One cars in the way they handle, the Indy vehicles are an absolute bitch to drive – they've got all the straight line speed and acceleration you could possibly hope for (and a little bit more), but trying to slow down and get around corners is one hell of a task. What's more, because you sit so low in the things, you can't really make out the corners until you're on top of them unless you use the chase mode or spend a long time memorising every bend of every course – and that could take some time. It is, however, at least realistic

It's not so gloomy when it comes to driving the buggies, though, for these are far more fun. The dry, bumpy desert courses of Easter Island and Egypt make for a good laugh as well as a great drive. Drifting your buggies around wide expanses of sand, bouncing them



(1) A total of 36 tracks make up the game, though there are six core courses of which the others are variations. (2) Spin-outs in the chicanes.



PUBLISHER

Ocean

DEVELOPER

Eutechnyx

RELEASE DATE

October

ORIGIN

UK

PRICE

£19.99

STYLE

Racing



**1** Use the 'hard turn' button to ease the sports cars round tight corners. **2** More buggy fun. **3** Over the wooden bridge and off to the pyramids. **4** This is, in fact, the middle of a forest, though it is a bit dark for the middle of the afternoon. **5** The true 3D environment means you can drive off the edge here, should you have a death wish.



**1** Into the darkness.  
**2** Note the cool waterfall to the right.

off banked walls and hurtling them through darkened tunnels is a right hoot, though these are tough cars to handle. They tip over easily and are slow to get going again, so winning a race is about keeping your cool and taking it as steady as you can. Boy racer tactics result in broken egos.

And if you thought the buggies were tough, just wait until you've progressed on to the excellent Dakar Rally cars. These super-dune buggies bounce and shift all over the shop, making even completing the course a mammoth task, let alone doing well in the race order. They flip over easily and are slow in comparison to the other classes.

Finally we have the rally cars, which do a good impression of the cars you're no doubt used to driving in V-Rally. Although not as tricky to handle as Infogrames' modern classic, the amount of rear-end drift, sharp cornering abilities and high top-speed are all spot-on. The courses, which are based in the Highlands and in the Alps, are all extremely demanding too, requiring huge amounts of concentration and rapid adjustments in driving style to complete successfully. Of all the

classes of car available in the game, we'd have to say that the rally cars are the most rewarding to drive.

What are not quite so rewarding, however, are the graphics. Although initially impressive, they don't have the detail or the finesse of either *Rage Racer* or *V-Rally*. Tough comparisons, but the driving games market is a fiercely fought one, and you've got to excel in all areas to come out near the top. The speed of the games is well up to scratch, there's no doubting that, but the background detail does seem a bit blocky and many of the road textures look all wrong.

No, this game's winning ticket is its variation. There are 40 different cars to drive, there are 36 tracks to tackle arranged over the six countries, and as you progress through the game, the hazards on the tracks become increasingly diverse (dodge avalanches, lava explosions and rock slides). There's also a decent spread of game modes – race against seven other CPU cars, against yourself in time trials, or take on human opponents in split-screen and link-up modes. But its variation is also its weakness. *Total Drivin'* doesn't quite hang together as a single game; instead it feels like a collection of different driving games, each of varying enjoyment.

Will Groves



**1** The cars are a tad twitchy around roadside scenery. Hit the grass verges too hard and you're sure to flip onto your roof, wasting valuable seconds. **2** Just like this, in fact. It has to be said that the buggies are particularly roof happy. You have been warned.

## VERDICT

GRAPHICS:

ORIGINAL RELEASE

**2** *Total Drivin'* has spread itself just a little too thinly, and fails to score that little bit higher as a result. An admirable effort, but no cigar.

GAMEPLAY

ORIGINAL SCORE

LIFESPAN

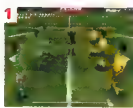
TIMELESSNESS

Official UK  
**PlayStation**  
Platinum Special

**8**  
OUT OF 10



## Actua Soccer



**1** The ref asks the Brazilian what on earth they were thinking of in the France '98 final. **2** Blue marks the spot. But no-one's there. **3** Look at the size of that Stadium.

■ **PLAYERS:** One-Two  
 ■ **RELEASE DATE:** March '99  
 ■ **PRICE:** £19.99

**M**any games have since improved upon this, but at the time of its release, *Actua Soccer* was a corker. It's way down the list now, of course, but at £20 it still delivers a solid, good-looking chunk of footy. *Actua Soccer* boasts exactly the features that any decent soccer sim should, such as tournament options aplenty, multiple camera angles, numerous strategy options, and atmospheric sounds. And it does all this with a surprising amount of

panache too.

The graphics are the main attraction. A gorgeous 3D stadium shifts around smoothly and the animation of the players is still fairly impressive. There are rough edges. It's not as responsive as more recent games and the goalies stink. And it's not *ISS Pro* which is also on Platinum, but it's still well worth the asking price of two tenners.

**Outmoded, but still looks good and plays well for the price.**

**VERDICT 7/10**

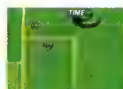


## adidas Power Soccer

■ **PLAYERS:** One-Four  
 ■ **RELEASE DATE:** May '96  
 ■ **PRICE:** £19.99

**F**ooty games have come a long way since *adidas Power Soccer* first hit the PlayStation. That's why at the time, at full price, it received an eight out of ten score and a Star Player accolade. It's also why it was described as a "ridiculously entertaining".

But placing it next to the likes of *ISS Pro '98* and *FIFA '99* is rather like placing Bristol Rovers next to the current, treble-winning



**1** Not exactly cutting edge is it? **2** Realistic player animation is notable by its absence. **3** The goalie thuffs it. Let's see it again!

Manchester United squad. Much of the entertainment at the time came from the amusing special moves (shoves, head kicks and assaults included) but these days, this is a dodgy old fart

**Fun at the time, but it's more than ready for retirement.**

**VERDICT 6/10**



## Air Combat



■ **PLAYERS:** One  
 ■ **RELEASE DATE:** Nov '95  
 ■ **PRICE:** £19.99

**T**his flight series, called *Ace Combat* in the States, is going to enter its third, impressive incarnation later this year. This is a tribute to its appeal, but in truth, the original was far from perfect.

Of course, it was one of the earliest PlayStation titles and as such, delivered graphical spectacle previously unseen on a home console. It also provided a pleasing variety of mission types and plenty

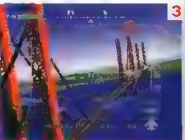
of action. But while it assuaged the senses it simply couldn't satisfy the gamer's appetite. Having come from a coin-op, it was geared around quick and relatively easy thrills rather than long term, thought-provoking gameplay.

It still pleases the eye. It's still quite a thrill to play. And had it originally released at £20 it would have been an absolute corker. But these days gamers want, and most of the time get, more

**Stick visuals and varied gameplay can't mask the fact that it's a limited arcade game.**

**VERDICT 6/10**

**1** Time for a spot of mid-air refuelling. Get us ten silk cut when you go to pay. **2** A big building. I shall take it out regardless of who it belongs to. **3** Same applies here.



# Alien Trilogy



**1** It's doom and gloom all the way. **2** Blow up the barrels. **3** No sign of any aliens yet. **4** Spoken too soon. Blow it away, THUS!



■ **PLAYERS** One  
■ **RELEASE DATE** April '96  
■ **PRICE** £19.99

**A**lien Trilogy has scored the same here on Platinum as it did at full price several years ago. That means it's only worth half the money. Or does it mean it's only half as good as newer games? Bloody confusing trying to re-rate games when you have to view them through the mists of time. But rate them we do, and what we're saying here is, very basically, that for this price, *Alien Trilogy* is a very, very good game.

Released at the time when people were still going bonkers over *Doom*, this offered (and still offers) a similar fix of first-person shooter. It may not have the brilliance of *Doom*, but it makes up for its shortcomings by having the *Alien* licence attached to it.

The game is made up of a series of missions, whether it be to kill

the Xenomorphs, collect tags or whatever. You then stalk, kill, open doors, discover secret areas by blasting through thin walls, upgrade your arsenal and earn your spurs.

Unlike the terror of the unexpected that *Doom* delivers, this game is all about tension which is heightened by the inclusion of a scanner that shows up Aliens as white dots. You know they're there, but you can't see them yet. This is where the excitement in *Alien Trilogy* stems from. Well, and the moment when a face-hugger or Alien finally decides to show itself and

rip your organs out. And this happens very frequently. That's why it's sooo satisfying when you manage to take one out with a suitably beefy, futuristic weapon.

It's not *Doom*, but this is a different game to *Doom* and should be treated as such. The graphical variety, the missions, the range of weapons and the atmosphere make it, very nearly, a half-price classic.

**This is great fun. Spooky, tense gameplay, varied graphics and some top weapons.**

**VERDICT 8/10**



**1** You can just see something here. **2** At last. Full-on alien action.

# Battle Arena Toshinden

■ **PLAYERS** One-Two  
■ **RELEASE DATE** Dec '95  
■ **PRICE** £19.99

**I**n the early days of PlayStation, it was thought that the race to produce the ultimate 3D beat 'em up would be fought between *Tekken* and *Toshinden*. *Street Fighter* had already established itself as the best technical combat series, but who would win out in the next generation battle? Actually, it soon became apparent that *Tekken* was King, but back in '95, *Toshinden* was in with a good shout.

You've probably already glanced at the score and realised that, even as £20, this is crusty and looking as outmoded as your Dad's beloved old Morris Minor. But having established that, we'll take a look at some of the reasons it caused a stir at the time it was first released. It was the first 3D beat 'em up. The contenders still stood fixly face-to-face, but they could roll around and circle each other for the first time and this added a new strategic layer to the beat 'em up. It also, of course had those proper

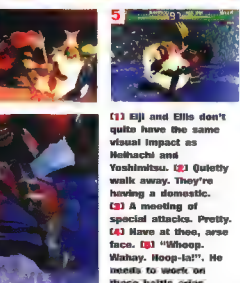
3D characters. They look piss-poor next to *Tekken*'s lovely ladies and gents but at the time the gaudy shaded, adequately animated figures cut quite a dash.

And the gameplay? Well, a step down from the complexity of *Street Fighter* it might have been, but at the time, a surprisingly accomplished depth of weapon-based and hand-to-hand combat was achieved. Basically, it answered a few critics who thought the 3D combat game couldn't possibly offer the depth of a 2D combat game. For the first time, it looked possible to move successfully into the third dimension. A real achievement.

So for these reasons, the press and public alike were quite right and justified in applauding the appearance of *Battle Arena Toshinden*. But the next two versions were to prove disappointing, while subsequent versions of *Tekken* improved exponentially and turned out to be not only great 3D beat 'em ups, but the best beat 'em ups full stop. Ah well.

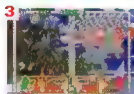
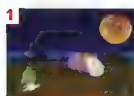
**It's a little piece of PlayStation history, but *Battle Arena Toshinden* has had its day.**

**VERDICT 6/10**



**1** Eiji and Ellis don't quite have the same visual impact as Melhiachi and Yoshimitsu. **2** Quietly walk away. They're having a domestic. **3** A meeting of special attacks. Pretty. **4** Have at thee, arse face. **5** "Whoop. Wahay. Hoop-lal". He needs to work on those battle cries.

## Bust-A-Move 2



**1** Bub and Bob, the heroes. **2** What's your bubble-busting poison? **3** Bob is, it seems, a complete looser.

■ **PLAYERS:** One-Two  
■ **RELEASE DATE:** July '98  
■ **PRICE:** £19.99

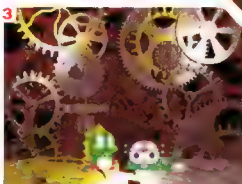
**F**orget games that push the PlayStation to its limits for a moment. This is *Bust-A-Move 2* and it's a simplistic work of genius. One venture and you are hooked, lined, and completely sunkered. Sank, in fact. Sunk, even.

As you do is fire coloured red bubbles at other coloured bubbles. Get three in a line, and they pop and disappear. The first to get rid of their bubbles wins. Or you can force a foe into filling their screen with bubbles until they can't go anywhere and victory is yours. Best of all, if you destroy a gang of four or more bubbles, they deftly sneak into your opponent's arena causing mayhem and forcing them to swiftly rethink plans. Regard with glee as they shift a puzzled sideways glance, their screens doubling in bubbles. This is

gameplay in its purest form. *BAM* is for one or two players. It's perfectly acceptable, enjoyable home entertainment for the solo player. But with two it's a riot. So get down the shops, demand that the shopkeeper hands over a copy, hand him or her 20 quid back, then smile in the knowledge that your life is complete.

**Its simplistic brilliance is hard to describe. Get it. Get it now.**

**VERDICT 9/10**



**1** Who's that young lady? Surely she's no match for a dragon, albeit a small one. **2** The bubbly action is in full swing. **3** And we don't rightly know what this is.

## Command & Conquer

■ **PLAYERS:** One  
■ **RELEASE DATE:** Jan '97  
■ **PRICE:** £19.99

**A**t one time, strategy gaming was a dirty word to console owners. These games were the preserve of spoddy, anorak-wearing PC owners who wouldn't know a good game if it stepped off the train they'd just 'spotted' and bit them in the cagoule.

Times have changed thankfully and we are now singing from the same gloriously varied gaming hymn sheet. This is in no small measure due to the release of *Command & Conquer* - a game that showed PlayStation owners how brilliant strategy gaming could be.

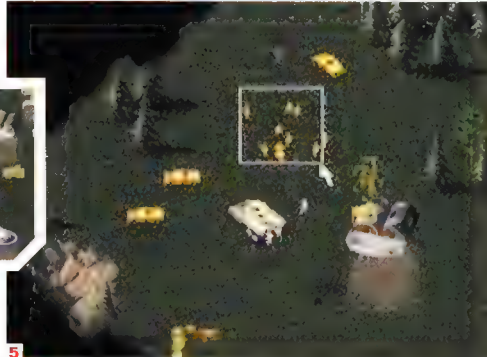
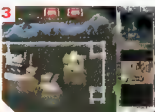
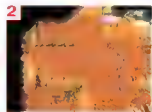
There were a few faults with it. The speed wasn't up to scratch and the controls were not particularly well translated from the PC keyboard to the PlayStation joystick, but the problems were not sufficiently bad to ruin the experience.

The game involves scrolling around a map, laying down the foundations that will enable you to find the resources to build up an

army then using these resources to defeat the enemy. A simple enough aim, but as the missions progress, things get more complicated, and your skills of strategic planning and execution are tested to the limit. At £20, it's a great strategy game to cut your teeth on. You can then move onto the sequel, *Red Alert*.

**A fabulously playable entry into strategy gaming on PlayStation.**

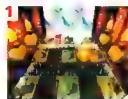
**VERDICT 7/10**



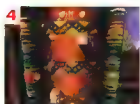
**1** Yes, yes, we know it doesn't look like much. But it's home... or soon will be. **2** The fact is, even though this looks a bit primitive, it's hugely playable. **3** Build up your defences. **4** They look like toys. **5** Kill them all.



# Crash Bandicoot



**1** **[1] A boss level. Tricky. [2] Go on Crash, she fancies you rotten. [3] A secret section. [4] Up, up and... then you plummet.**



■ **PLAYERS** One  
■ **RELEASE DATE** Feb '97  
■ **PRICE** £19.99

**C**rash Bandicoot 3 is better than Crash 2. Crash 2 is better than Crash. But, BLT, any improvements that were made were not groundbreaking. The result, is that even many moons later, the original Crash Bandicoot still stands up as a graphically stunning and hugely entertaining platformer.

Initially disappointing if you haven't played a Crash game before is the fact that the player doesn't have unlimited freedom of movement like in *Mario 64* (or indeed *Cox or Croc*). But this soon fades when you realise that it's not meant to be THAT sort of platformer. It's a highly polished, traditional platformer that just happens to have 3D graphics and it's all the stronger for that fact.

There are three distinct level types. In the first you run into the

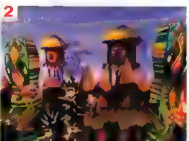
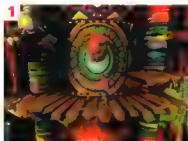
screen. In another you run out of it, and in the third you move from side to side. It may not sound particularly radical, but it has enabled the developers to introduce some very intricate and varied challenges which differ according to level type.

One worry is that Crash only has about 30 levels. But be reassured, these levels are HUGE. They're also so well-constructed that the challenge is enormous too. And even if you're not entirely sold on the traditional gameplay, few gamers will be able to resist Crash

himself, with his huge sense of humour, spin attacks and generally cheeky attitude. He's a star, and that's why he's already into his third hugely successful game. So, Crash novices are strongly advised to snap up this for 20 quid and we guarantee, it'll only be a matter of time before you're trying to scrape together another £80 to get hold of the two sequels.

**This has hardly aged at all. There's little doubt that Crash Bandicoot is a superstar.**

**VERDICT 6/10**



**1** Look at the quality of the graphics. **2** Beware of things with spikes.

# Destruction Derby

■ **PLAYERS** One-Two  
■ **RELEASE DATE** Oct '95  
■ **PRICE** £19.99

**P**layStation gamers are soon to be treated to a destructive double whammy with the release of both *Destruction Derby 3* and *Demolition Racers*. It should be an interesting scrap and it also means that even at Platinum price, the original and flawed *Destruction Derby* is probably a bit too long in the tooth to be a real contender.

So what did this old fella originally offer in his heyday? First of all, there were several painfully annoying flaws in the gameplay. On the figure-eight course, for example, it was all too easy to get horribly bashed up at the crossroads and not be able to finish the race. Destruction is part of the experience, of course, but the level of damage received was often far too high. Also, as you span around after a collision, it was impossible to tell which direction you had ended up facing. There was no visual indicator to guide you (a simple 'wrong way' message would have sufficed) so while the computer controlled cars

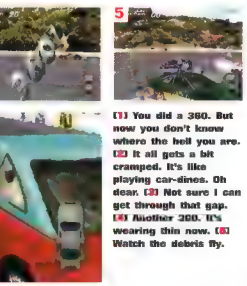
continued on their merry way, you were left completely flummoxed. Your car's controls also went completely to pot when you received damage. Perhaps it was realistic, but it didn't make for a balanced racing experience.

Despite all this, though, reviewers still kind of liked the game because the sheer excitement of the racing lifted it above its own limitations. The graphics were pretty good, and the crashes and damage provided a real spectacle. And the *Destruction Derby* mode – a last-man-standing battle to the death in a huge arena – was more fun than anyone at the time had yet experienced on a home console.

So, you ended up with a terribly frustrating game that just happened to be compulsively playable at the same time. That was then, though. Today, it's a scrappy-looking game and should played before you commit your £20 to it. Better still, wait until *DD3* and *Demolition Racers* appear, because you'll probably find it's worth spending the extra cash.

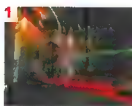
**Exciting and intensely annoying all at the same time. Think carefully before you cough up.**

**VERDICT 6/10**



**1** You did a 360. But now you don't know where the hell you are. **2** It all gets a bit cramped. It's like playing car-dines. Oh dear. **3** Not sure I can get through that gap. **4** Another 200. It's wearing thin now. **5** Watch the debris fly.

## Excalibur 2555AD



**(1)** Thank God for that, I was hunting. **(2)** These Telfas look a bit menacing. **(3)** He's dropped his sword.

|                 |           |
|-----------------|-----------|
| ■ PLAYERS:      | One       |
| ■ RELEASE DATE: | March '97 |
| ■ PRICE:        | £19.99    |

**W**hen it first came out *Excalibur 2555AD* was pitched as a sort of time-travelling, fantasy-based alternative to *Tomb Raider*. And, in a market that wasn't swamped with clones in the way it is today, that's exactly what it was. But now we're awash with 3D adventures and with *Tomb Raider 2* on Platinum, it's hard to see the point of spending good money on this.

The game is played out on only one level. There's no up and down,

you simply wander from room to room. The puzzles are a bit shoddy, comprising obvious solutions to simple problems solved in a linear way. The only thing that separates it from *Tomb Raider* is the addition of close-quarters combat. Otherwise it's a pretty limited game made poorer by the strength of the competition.

**A fun adventure when the PlayStation was in its infancy, but it's totally outclassed now.**

**VERDICT 7/10**



## Final Doom

|                 |         |
|-----------------|---------|
| ■ PLAYERS:      | One     |
| ■ RELEASE DATE: | Dec '96 |
| ■ PRICE:        | £19.99  |

**I**nitially *Final Doom* is disappointing - it's really just 30 new levels. The graphics don't appear to be any different from the original (they are - slightly), there are no new weapons and you feel you've seen it all before. But then...

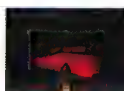
... you start to play it and you remember everything that's so fantastic about *Doom* - the way that you can walk, run, hide around corners, pick monsters off from a



distance, strafe across a doorway, rush headlong into a room full of monsters with your chainsaw whirring... it's bliss! Just 30 new levels? Pah! These are 30 killer new levels. *Final Doom* is the final word

**Old, blocky, thuggish and absolutely, terrifyingly brilliant.**

**VERDICT 8/10**



**(1)** An armour vest. Pick it up, doll. **(2)** Open the door and pray you survive. **(3)** So where's the torch option when you need it, eh?



## Doom



|                 |         |
|-----------------|---------|
| ■ PLAYERS:      | One     |
| ■ RELEASE DATE: | Jan '96 |
| ■ PRICE:        | £39.99  |

**M**ust we go through it all again? There are two *Dooms* on PlayStation. The one above is slightly better graphically and has 30 all-new levels. This one is graphically inferior (only very slightly) but contains all the original, amazingly designed levels that made the game so legendary in the first place. Sorted.

Which should you buy? That's a hard one to answer. If state of the

art eye-candy is what you crave from your games, then you should avoid the pair of them like a bad smell. If, on the other hand, you want a gameplay formula that over the years has delighted millions of gamers all over the planet, then you should buy both of them.

Sure, *Final Doom* is really just 30 extra levels and at full price, it would have been a bit expensive. But now they're both £20, it's like buying a PC game and add-on disc.

**The original *Doom*. Even the blocky visuals can't hide a work of genius this is.**

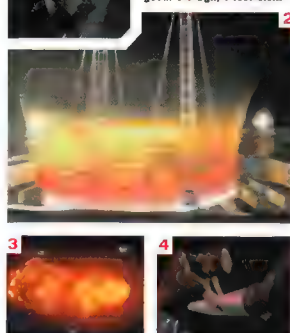
**VERDICT 8/10**

**(1)** It's not a hotel I'd choose to come lunch to. **(2)** It looks like an Indian restaurant near where we work. **(3)** The BFG9000. The weapon of choice for nutters.



# Fade To Black

**1** Lots of rendered sequences make for high atmosphere. **2** Very pretty. **3** This can't be good. **4** Ugh, I feel sick.



**■ PLAYERS:** One  
**■ RELEASE DATE:** July '96  
**■ PRICE:** £19.99

**C**rusty old gamers like the one who's writing this will be familiar with the name Conrad B Hart. He was the hero of a game called *Flashback*, a superb platform adventure on the MegaDrive that was, at the time, a mind-blowing experience that married precision platforming with deep, thoughtful, puzzling gameplay and heaps of atmosphere. It was not unlike *Abe's Oddysee*, but, of course, appeared more than half a decade before it. So when the long-awaited sequel finally saw the light of day on PlayStation, gamers were understandably excited. They were also not to be disappointed. Apart from a few flaws, which stemmed from the transition from 2D to 3D, it was every bit as exciting as the 16bit classic.

The gameplay is very tight

constructed to revolve around the hero's movements. He can walk, run, jump and take small steps. So, when obstacles like pits, enemies and laser traps are introduced, the player must – by process of elimination – work out the precise moves and button presses required to make it through any one series of hazards. On the surface, it's a painstaking, pernickety style of play, but once you get into it, working out what's required makes for compulsive and rewarding play.

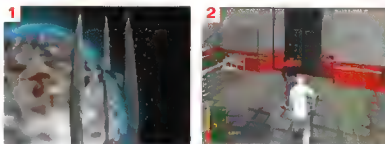
As already mentioned, the new 3D viewpoint isn't without its

problems. The camera is not always as intelligent as it might be and targeting enemies can be a pain because you don't get to see the enemy properly until after you've taken your weapon out of its holster.

But these faults are easily ignored because the game oozes class. It has aged, as you might expect, but it still gives you a hefty chunk of involving, entertaining and rewarding adventuring.

**A great game. Atmospheric, thought-provoking, intelligent.**

**VERDICT 8/10**



**1** A bit better than the N64 spacestation. **2** Watch out for the old fart.

# Formula 1

**■ PLAYERS:** One  
**■ RELEASE DATE:** Sept '96  
**■ PRICE:** £19.99

**T**he discovery of several tawdry bugs, the release of sequels and the general passing of time have meant that the original *Formula 1* is no longer a big deal. It was when it came out though. A very big deal. In fact, it was the mother of all racers for a while. This was down to the fact that for a short period, it was the most thoroughly researched, well-crafted and visually accurate racer around. The real teams and drivers from real F1 are in there ('96 season). Murray Walker provides his unique commentary. And the tracks are beautifully reproduced from maps of the real circuits. Gorgeous.

The gameplay is also pretty special and was a bit of a revelation at the time. An Arcade mode is kindly provided so that you can get straight in there and experience the thrill of F1 racing. And when you want to acquire the skills, as well as experience the thrills, you can switch to the Grand Prix mode which is a full-on simulation. In this mode

things are much harder. Clip the edge of the track and you'll spin off like the Tasmanian Devil.

This mode, it has to be said, is for the real F1 nuts because of the level of expertise needed to master it. But the great thing is, by fiddling with various options and skill levels, you can tailor the difficulty so that you can gradually master various aspects of proper F1 racing. And by the time you've started winning Grand Prix, you'll wonder why you ever bothered with that shallow, simplistic Arcade Mode.

But now, here's the problem. *F1 '97* is going Platinum. OH NO! The review was going so well, but that little nugget of information, sadly, drives a stake through *Formula 1*'s heart. You see, *F1 '97* was most improved in all areas – the teams are slightly more up to date so you get Schumacher in Ferrari where he belongs. Since the games are so similar in many ways, you'd be mad to own both. It was a milestone at the time, but these days, it's on the back row of the grid.

**A great racing game that, unfortunately, has just been made obsolete by the sequel.**

**VERDICT 8/10**



**1** The graphics still look good, even by today's standards. **2** That would be Schumacher if this was the '98 season. **3** A daring manoeuvre. Good job the McLaren moved over. **4** The camera angles are dramatic. **5** What went wrong with *F1 '96*, for heaven's sake?



# G-Police



**[1]** The explosions alone are worth the 20 quid. **[2]** What a fantastic chopper. **[3]** The flare on the jet engines is gorgeous.

■ **PLAYERS:** One  
■ **RELEASE DATE:** Oct '97  
■ **PRICE:** £19.99

**P**sygnosis have always delivered the goods when it comes to graphics. But they've recently gone through a bit of a sketchy patch in terms of the gameplay. Don't let this put you off though. They're returning to form and more important is the fact that at one time, they were the most impressive PlayStation developer so there are a lot of games in their back catalogue worth looking at.

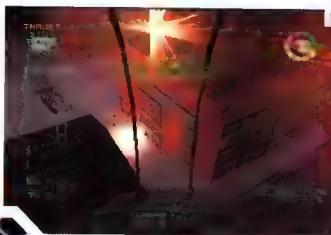
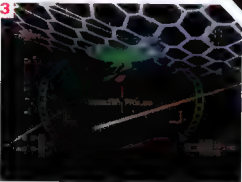
One such game is the amazing *G-Police*. Without going into too much plot, it's a futuristic mission-based blaster in which you play the part of a pilot who flies a unique attack chopper (notable for its lack of rotors - replaced by jet engines).

Missions take place across cities enclosed in huge domes. There are strategy elements involved but for

the most part, this is an action game. Missions can involve simple seek-and-destroy exercises, escorting limousines through the city streets and tailing suspects around the city. The weapons are amazing, the explosion shattering and the best part is that it takes place in living, breathing cities that you can fly in and around at will. Brilliant

**Dark, atmospheric, futuristic blaster. Top looks, top blasting.**

**VERDICT 9/10**



**[1]** There's a bit of pop-up from time to time, but mostly, the graphics are amazing. **[2]** Oh, *SDOM!* **[3]** That's the edge of the dome.

# Heart Of Darkness

■ **PLAYERS:** One  
■ **RELEASE DATE:** June '98  
■ **PRICE:** £19.99

**I**n this 2D platformer you control Andy, a young lad who one day goes to the park with his dog, Whiskey. As he and his four-legged friend are observing a solar eclipse, Whiskey is whisked away by the Forces of Darkness. Andy jumps into his dimension-altering flying machine and sets off to rescue his chum.

One of the best aspects of the game is its highly detailed nature. Intricate, exotic jungle vegetation and colourful, jewel-encrusted walls of an ancient cavern never fail to impress. Similarly, the creatures are as well animated as any you'll see in a videogame. As for the main character, a lot of attention has been paid to making Andy's walking, running, climbing, swimming and swinging as convincing and fluid as possible. Sadly, the gameplay fails to match all this visual prowess. The gameplay is very similar to that in *Fade To Black* (or its predecessor *Flashback*) where you have to work

out what sequence of moves is required to solve a problem. But the trouble is that Andy is blessed with infinite lives so any sense of tension rapidly evaporates, leaving a rather elementary case of trial and error.

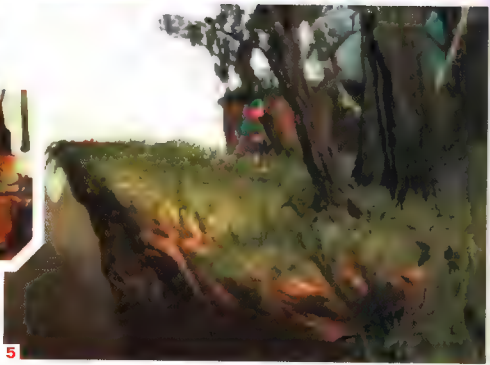
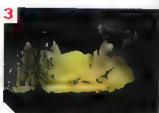
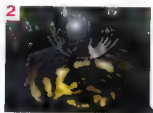
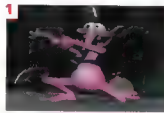
This is an enjoyable title. It's just that it may prove too frustrating and old-fashioned for some players.

**Looks a million bucks, but plays about 50 pence. Shame!**

**VERDICT 6/10**



**[1]** One of the more comical enemies. **[2]** This mole's not going to be friendly, is he? **[3]** This is an in-game shot. It looks great. **[4]** How do you get across here? That's one of the puzzles. **[5]** It's just a shame the game's dumb.



# Hercules



**1** He's a hero. But he should do something about that stuff back.  
**2** Don't think much of yours. Chop the heads.



■ **PLAYERS:** One  
■ **RELEASE DATE:** Dec '98  
■ **PRICE:** £19.99

**A**fter flirting with the 3D platformer for *A Bug's Life*, it's interesting that for their next project, *Tarzan*, Disney are going back to the old 2D approach that made the likes of *Aladdin* and this game so popular.

It may be dated in feel, but this traditional approach works well. The animation is spot-on, capturing the unique look of the Gerald Scarfe-inspired movie. And the gameplay is exactly as you

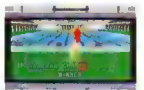
would expect. Jumpy, collecty fare with enough humorous flourishes to keep the kiddies entranced. And that's kind of the point. You know what to expect from Disney.

**Traditional stuff. But it's Disney and the kids love it.**

**VERDICT 7/10**



# International Track & Field



Swim. Swim for your lives. Or at the very least, a medal.

■ **PLAYERS:** One-Four  
■ **RELEASE DATE:** July '98  
■ **PRICE:** £19.99

**T**he original arcade button-basher was a monumentally great game. And this modern 3D version manages to look great and retain all the playability of the original.

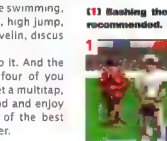
You know the score. You bash buttons, you control trajectories, you time jumps, you win medals and get high scores. Simple and brilliant. So all you really need to know about this game is the events included. These are 100 metres,

110m hurdles, freestyle swimming, long jump, triple jump, high jump, pole vault, hammer, javelin, discus and shotput.

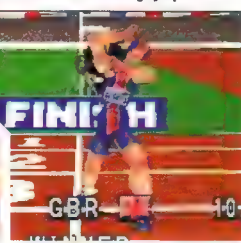
That's all there is to it. And the great thing is, up to four of you can play at once. So, get a multitap, and three mates around and enjoy what is arguably one of the best multiplayer games ever.

**Button-bashing brilliance. This is cracking multi-player fun. It's very hard on your joypads, though.**

**VERDICT 8/10**



**1** Bashing the buttons can damage your fingers. Gloves are recommended. **2** Oh dear. He's for the high jump.



# Loaded

■ **PLAYERS:** One-Two  
■ **RELEASE DATE:** Jan '98  
■ **PRICE:** £19.99

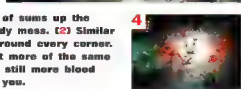
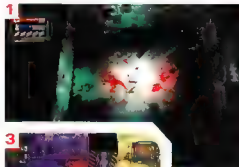
**L**oaded is a perfect example of style over playability. Six mercenaries have been wrongly imprisoned on a faraway planet and must make good their escape. A gaggle of levels, hidden rooms and puzzles stand between them and escape. The characters include Butch, a large fellow who wears a purple dress and stilettos, and Frank, a clown bedecked in khaki. One or two can

play, two sharing the same screen which means you have to totter around together; stray too far apart and you come to a standstill.

The basic premise is simple. You wander around and shoot things. The levels are massive and the effects are lovely. But these are both the game's strengths and weaknesses. It's repetitive, it's sprawling and it's too mad in the face. A decent pick-up-and-play shooter if you don't have to spend good money on it.

**Too in-yer-face and repetitive to give long-lasting fun.**

**VERDICT 5/10**



**1** This kind of sums up the game. A bloody mess. **2** Similar sights wait around every corner. **3** Here's yet more of the same then. **4** And still more blood and stuff for you.

# Mickeys Wild Adventure



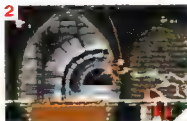
**[1]** These darned weasels. **[5H]** Mickey'll sort them out. **[23]** Did you used to call them skellingtons when you were young? No? Oh, how embarrassing. **[23]** Tumbling crates. Call Health and Safety.

■ PLAYERS: One  
■ RELEASE DATE: March '96  
■ PRICE: £19.99

**E**ven at half price, you might look at this game and think Sony were taking the, er, Mickey. After all, it really is an old-fashioned platformer. *Crash* is traditional, but at least the developers had the decency to dress it up in new 3D clothes.

But the truth is, *Mickey's Wild Adventure* isn't actually that bad, especially for older gamers. For a start, the gameplay is really pretty tight. Play it for ten minutes and

you'll no doubt want to see it through to the end. Also, the graphics beautifully reflect the Disney style (check out the way it goes from classic black and white animation to colour). It's not a triumph, but it's a pretty and thoughtful attempt to bring animated cinema to the small, interactive screen



**A Disney fan will find it enchanting. The hardcore gamer might find it a bit dated.**

VERDICT 6/10

# Need For Speed

■ PLAYERS: One-Two  
■ RELEASE DATE: April '96  
■ PRICE: £19.99

**F**ancy belting along an alpine road in a Porsche at 140mph? You should try *Porsche Challenge*. Mind you, this offers other vehicles too.

In fact, *Need For Speed* offers plentiful tracks, a range of quality sporting vehicles to drive, and both two-player split-screen and link-up modes. Not bad.

All the cars have been accurately modelled on real vehicles, both in

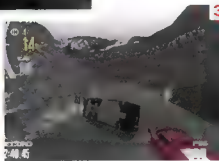
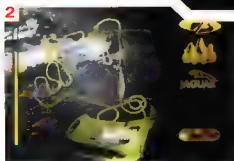


**[1]** A bit of a looker in its day. **[23]** Some of the courses are a bit on the twisty side. **[33]** There's a need for slightly less speed.

looks and feel. But despite the pleasing realism, the game is getting on a bit and it would be utter madness to choose this over *Gran Turismo* which has just gone Platinum as well.

**A solid enough racer, but with Gran Turismo at £20, forget it.**

VERDICT 6/10



# Pandemonium



■ PLAYERS: One  
■ RELEASE DATE: March '95  
■ PRICE: £19.99

**A**part from the gorgeous camera angles, this may not offer much that's genuinely new to platformers, but who cares when the traditional elements have been so superbly blended together? *Pandemonium* offers 21 slick levels and two cool characters as well as bonus levels thrown in for good measure.

There are some smart FMV sequences, a whole host of weird

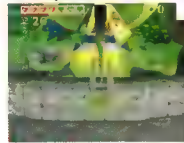
creatures that you destroy by bouncing on them and some surreal end-of-level bosses. As well as these elements, there are winds that carry you up into the sky or suck you into the ground, monsters that don't hurt you but bounce you for miles and slides that go on forever.

It hasn't got the mainstream appeal of *Crash* or the technical prowess of *Ape Escape* or *Spyro* but given its age, it still has enough quirky appeal and silky gameplay to excite you.

**Packed with originality and atmosphere. Well worth the cash.**

VERDICT 8/10

**[1]** You can choose to play as either of these two characters. **[23]** More rendered hits. Yum! **[33]** Ingenious bosses add to the whole experience.



**[1]** This **[23]** is **[33]** rubbish.



# PGA Tour '96



**[1]** A rendered scene...  
**[2]** ... looks into a far less satisfying in-game shot, it still looks pretty good, though

■ **PLAYERS:** One-Four  
■ **RELEASE DATE:** Jan '96  
■ **PRICE:** £19.99

**T**here are some good golf games on PlayStation now. The best of which is the slightly comic *Everybody's Golf*. But the more serious golf sims are probably not sufficiently brilliant to bury this one. At £20 we reckon it's quite a good entry into videogame golf.

There are only two courses available to play on which is the game's most obvious flaw. But otherwise it's a solid couple of rounds. The courses are in nice to look

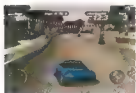
at. The control system is the slick, familiar legacy of Electronic Arts' previous 16bit golf games and the commentator and crowd noises add atmosphere. Basic, but satisfying.

**Not much of a tour with two courses, but it plays very well.**

**VERDICT 8/10**



# Porsche Challenge



Drive a Porsche. Nice!

■ **PLAYERS:** One-Two  
■ **RELEASE DATE:** June '97  
■ **PRICE:** £19.99

**I**t's such a shame. When *Porsche Challenge* first came out it was a cracker. Top rendered cars, great tracks and some amazingly realistic handling. It still is great, and at £20 would have been a serious alternative to the full-priced *Gran Turismo*. But, *GT* is now coming out on Platinum too so we can only really recommend this to obsessive nutters who plan to buy several racers.

Like we said, there's little wrong

with the game graphically, the handling, thanks to close co-operation with Porsche, is spot on and the courses are superbly constructed, taking obvious inspiration from *Ridge Racer*'s track set-up. But now, the fact that you can only drive Porsches compares unfavourably with *GT*'s varied garage line-up. Comparatively, this is yesterday's news.

**Still a satisfying racer for those who can afford several games. But the first choice is *Gran Turismo* every time.**

**VERDICT 8/10**

**[1]** The replays were looking good long before *GT* came along. **[2]** Secret routes open up as you play.



# Rayman

■ **PLAYERS:** One  
■ **RELEASE DATE:** Dec '95  
■ **PRICE:** £19.99

**B**efore *Mario 64* came along, the obvious thing to do with a platform game was to do the same as before. Only better. That's what *Rayman* tried to do and although partially successful, it'll probably only go down in history as the most garishly colourful platformer ever made. In the style of the 16bit *Sonic* and *Super Mario World* it offers platforms and ledges aplenty, a

mind boggling wealth of enemies, vast weaving level designs and loads of secret areas. It also features an intriguing hero who is animated in a unique fashion, made up of separate body parts all moving about independently. The effect is quite unlike any other solid game character. Also he has a mop of hair that ingeniously acts as a lariat to lift him up to high areas and also acts as a rotor to make him fly. Original, then, but it now feels awkward and old.

**A spark of originality at the time, but doesn't cut it now.**

**VERDICT 5/10**



**[1]** You wouldn't believe it's years old, would you? **[2]** This man has no limits. Just floating extremities. **[3]** You can hide, but you can't, or, run. **[4]** It's just a pity the gameplay is so annoying.

# Ridge Racer



**[1]** Remember how gob-smacking this was when it first came out? We do. **[2]** The handling is a dream. **[3]** Worth £207 We reckon so.

|                 |         |
|-----------------|---------|
| ■ PLAYERS:      | One     |
| ■ RELEASE DATE: | Dec '95 |
| ■ PRICE:        | £19.99  |

**T**his was the first game on the PlayStation and when eager gamers first loaded it up their eyes practically popped out of their heads. Surely it wasn't possible to bring an arcade-perfect version of Namco's mighty *Ridge Racer* into the home?

Well, no it wasn't. But the developers of PlayStation *Ridge Racer* had papered over the cracks so cunningly that to all intents and purposes, it was arcade-perfect. Looking at it now, the graphics appear slightly crude, and of course, racers offer a lot more value for money in terms of cars and tracks these days. But it is still a class act.

It's bizarre, but going back to it, you can't help but be sucked in by the superb playability of it. This is especially remarkable when you

consider what the game looks like on paper. There's only one car. More startling, there's only really one track which gets altered as you go along to add variety. There's the Devil car to race against, but it's not exactly a treasure trove of secrets is it?

Despite all this, though, as much as you want to consign it to history, one play and you're hooked again.

**There is no debate. It's a classic. Gameplay like this never ages.**

**VERDICT 8/10**



**[1]** A Ridge tradition - the same stage at different times of the day and night. **[2]** Where better to show off the lightning than in a tunnel? **[3]** The reverse challenge.

# Soviet Strike

|                 |         |
|-----------------|---------|
| ■ PLAYERS:      | One     |
| ■ RELEASE DATE: | Oct '96 |
| ■ PRICE:        | £19.99  |

**S**oviet Strike, as you may have guessed, is one of Electronic Arts' famous 'Strike' games (previous examples being *Desert Strike*, *Jungle Strike* and *Urban Strike*). Pitching you into the familiar position of helicopter pilot extraordinaire, this overhead-viewed shoot 'em up sets you against the combined forces of the Soviet army, navy and airforce. Shooting stuff and blowing stuff up is the main order of the day but aside from all this mayhem, you're also presented with a small but significant amount of strategy.

Dotted around each level are fuel and ammo dumps which you'll need to visit fairly regularly. However there are only a limited number of dumps per level, so you have to be careful that you don't run out of the supplies that you need to finish each stage - otherwise it's a humiliating return to the beginning of that level to start all over again. The levels are cunningly designed

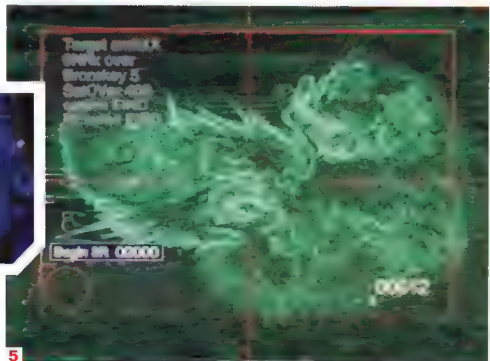
to stretch you to the limit of your capability every time so that you never feel like you're just coasting along. And there's nothing quite like the feeling of zooming in low over a hill and taking out a radar installation with a well-timed, surgical strike. *Soviet Strike* is still great fun to play.

**An old formula, but one that's still oddly compulsive.**

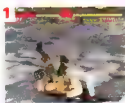
**VERDICT 7/10**



**[1]** That's a Russian. They have shifty eyes and one eyebrow. We learned that from our American chums. Very scientific. **[2]** Take out the tanks. From a safe distance. **[3]** It gets quite hot in the Soviet Union. **[4]** A Soviet bloke. **[5]** Dops!



# Tekken



**1** Don't worry, he's a chiropractor. **2** Michelle upsports her boss. **3** You know what's coming. **4** Watch it time and again.



■ **PLAYERS.** One-Two  
■ **RELEASE DATE.** Jan '96  
■ **PRICE.** £19.99

**N**amco. They did the first PlayStation racer and it was a stormer (it was *Ridge Racer* for those of you new to the PlayStation thing). They have since gone on to do great things with the *Ridge* sequels. But the amazing thing at the time was that they followed *Ridge Racer* with *Tekken* – the first tentative step into an area that was to spawn the best beat 'em up of all time... *Tekken 3*. But returning to the first game, this is what we thought about it back then...

*Tekken* isn't quite so engaging in the looks department as *Toshinden*, preferring instead to reserve its finery for the gameplay and vast array of character moves. The texture-mapping on the protagonists isn't so detailed, yet the animation is wonderfully fluid and particularly noticeable when

they're performing special moves. Each fighter displays different attributes, so while some move like the wind and can jab and kick furiously, others are a little more ponderous. But when the big guys do make contact, you know about it – as does your energy counter.

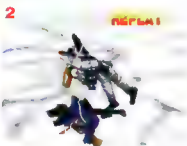
*Tekken* is a joy to play. You really don't need to know any of the special moves to enjoy the game. Each of the joypad's four main buttons represents a limb – a tremendously progressive feature – and with just a few minutes' practice you can soon give the opponent

the 'old one two'. You have no excuse NOT to buy it. *Tekken* is the best example of its genre.

High praise indeed. It doesn't stand up to later incarnations. The likes of *Soul Blade* have bettered it also. But it's still curiously playable. And if you were there when PlayStation first appeared, it still holds a place in your heart. Check it out. It's worth the cash.

**If beat 'em ups are your thing and Tekken 3 and 2 grabbed you, you might as well buy the set**

**VERDICT 8/10**



**1** Main-meat-kill-massard... relax. **2** The armour just slows you down.

# Thunder Hawk 2

■ **PLAYERS** One  
■ **RELEASE DATE** Feb '97  
■ **PRICE** £19.99

**W**hy do people play flight sims? Is it the thrill of navigating from A to B? Or the adrenaline rush of landing on a pitching aircraft carrier in a stormy sea? No, it's clearly the combat: flying against overwhelming odds, diving and twisting to escape hail of gunfire, looping the loop to take the enemy by surprise, and finally blowing said enemy out of the sky with a witty one-liner and a side-winder.

Most modern flight sims, however, tend to be fairly complicated beasts and you inevitably find that the dramatic twists and turns you dreamt of tend to be impossible for a number of complex, but logical, aeronautical reasons. *Firststorm*. *Thunderhawk 2*, however, is more flight 'game' than flight 'sim', and for those of you with no interest in being bogged down by stall speeds, lift ratios and other aerodynamic shackles, it takes flying back to basics.

It's a helicopter flight game that sits neatly between the simulation

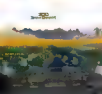
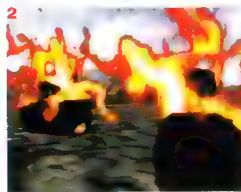
and shoot 'em up camps. It's a 3D blasterman with stunning polygon graphics, lots of weapons, and a wide array of military hardware. But take away the atmospheric sound fix, the digitised radio chatter and the mouth-watering visuals, and you're left with a game that's essentially *Jungle Strike* in 3D.

Rather than being just a midless shoot 'em up like Namco's *Air Combat*, though, Core Design has mixed flight sim strategy and graphical glitz to create an incredibly involving game.

To sum up, Core has produced an excellent helicopter game. It's a perfect mix of heavyweight sim and arcade-quality shoot 'em up, and a though the controls can take some getting used to, it doesn't detract from the fact that *Thunderhawk 2* is an exhilarating and highly addictive blast. And at the Platinum price it's a fantastic helping of action for very little moolah. G-Police does it better, but it's such an ill-served genre, this is worth getting.

**Forget the complexities of flight sims and get into this straightforward, airborne blast.**

**VERDICT 6/10**



**1** You're locked on. Just let fly with the missiles and try not to blink about the dire consequences. **2** You want to join the forces? **3** A successful attack. **4** Nice helicopter. **5** It is right to find this much destruction fun, so you think? **6** Ah whatever. FINE AT WILL.



## Tomb Raider



**1** How does she manage to stay down there with such big buoyancy aids? **2** Rich people get so bored in these big houses. **3** Bloody boxes of bloody treasure every-where. How tiresome.

■ PLAYERS **One**  
■ RELEASE DATE **Nov '96**  
■ PRICE **£19.99**

**I**s there really anyone out there who isn't yet familiar with Lara Croft, her ample bosoms and her equally ample trio of adventures? Thought not. But there may be a few of you who have only caught her latest adventure and know nothing of the first one.

Well, apart from being slightly rougher around the graphical edges and less controllable, the first game was, and still is, approximately as enjoyable as the subsequent sequels.

There are 16 massive levels. There is a good strong plot. Lara can walk, run, jump, shimmy and fire a whole host of cool weaponry. There are some superb enemies, great set pieces and cinematic cut-scenes. It's less action and more puzzle-based than *777*, but it's none the worse for that. Just slightly different.

**Lara's debut was astounding at the time and only slightly less so now. Get all three.**

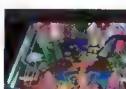
**VERDICT 9/10**



## True Pinball

■ PLAYERS **One**  
■ RELEASE DATE **March '96**  
■ PRICE **£19.99**

**A**fter developing a whole host of pinball games on the Amiga, Digital Illusions finally turned their hand to the PlayStation. And very impressive the result was. As well as featuring three tables from the brilliant *Pinball Illusions*, they also added an extra dimension bringing the game from 2D to 3D. The multiball feature, the bonus games and the super realistic movement of the ball all adds up



to a real pub table experience although you can't help feeling they could have been a little more adventurous given that this is a videogame. Ah well, top pinball action for connoisseurs.

**Very realistic. A big hit with players of the real thing.**

**VERDICT 7/10**

**1** It's the pinball. **2** It's still pinball. **3** It remains a pinball game. It's a good one, but you can't expect us to elaborate really.



## V-Rally



■ PLAYERS **One-Two**  
■ RELEASE DATE **July '97**  
■ PRICE **£19.99**

**I**f you've already had a good look through this Platinum special, you'll have read about some of the new and amazing Platinum releases. You'll also have gathered that although there are some real gems featured in these smaller reviews, many of them suffer the same fate - that they have now been superseded by better games.

*V-Rally* is one such game. Once great, but not such a hot prospect

now that *Colin McRae* is on PlayStation. But if rally driving is your passion, it still has its charms.

It's an enormous game featuring 45 courses and 11 spanking cars all of which look good and which handle in exactly the way they're supposed to. The driving is hugely exciting and there's a great split-screen, two-player mode included. *V-Rally* is good value. The only doubt comes in if you only ever plan to buy one rally game.

**If you can't get enough rallying, then this is a classy second choice after Colin McRae.**

**VERDICT 9/10**

**1** We've no real complaints about the range of cars on offer. **2** And the graphics aren't exactly terrible. **3** It's just that *Colin McRae Rally* is better.



# Worms

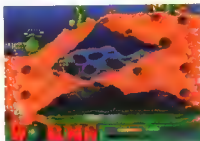
|                 |         |
|-----------------|---------|
| ■ PLAYERS:      | One-Two |
| ■ RELEASE DATE: | May '98 |
| ■ PRICE:        | £19.99  |

**D**espite the obvious similarity between *Worms* and the progenitor of all pointy-clicking-small-character games *Lemmings*, this game has one crucial difference: these little blighters are armed with a deadly array of weapons. This is a far cry from the pacifist ideals of *Lemmings*. Here, the only objective is survival.

Of course one of the surest methods of survival is destroying the enemy and the most satisfying outcome is achieved when that enemy is one of your mates.

Up to eight teams of four computer or human-controlled worms are pitted against each other on a variety of landscapes surrounded by water and designed around a particular theme.

The main weapons the worms can use include dynamite, mines, shotguns, grenades, mini-guns, scatter bombs, bazookas, homing missiles, air strikes, even *Street Fighter II* moves. All good destructive fun, to be sure.



The challenge of the game is judging the trajectories of your projectiles and taking into account factors such as the wind. Despite sounding a bit technical and looking like an 8bit creation (albeit an advanced one), *Worms* is one of the most addictive games around. However, much of its appeal is dependent on the human participation and you'll soon tire of the CPU worms' unpredictable behaviour - lurking as they do between being impossibly good and unbelievably stupid. But it will provide hours of black-hearted fun.

**It looks extremely crude, but this really is an enormously amusing multi-player game.**

**VERDICT 7/10**



# Arcade 8

The videogame magazine



## Do you feel lucky?

It's a shoot-'em-up special, including a first look at *Quake III: Arena*, reviews of all the best shooters on the market, with advice on how to join a gunfight on the Net and whether violent games will send you psycho!

**PLUS:** stunning pictures of the new *Lam Croft* as she reveals all!



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**TOP SECRET**

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Top Secret at the usual address). Can't see the cheat you want here? Give the line a try. Just call the number below and, once connected, press 0 to go to the game menu. Now just key in the five-digit code printed top left on every game disc. If there are any tips and cheats for that game you'll hear them, so have a pen and paper ready.

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BUTCHER'S APRON THAN ON YOUR SCRAWNY FRAME? WORRY  
NOT, MEEK SOUL, THERE ARE EVEN TIPS AND CHEATS FOR YOU.**



**Oddworld: Abe's Oddysey** was the lovable Molekin's first outing, and still stands up well today. **Actin Soccer**, on the other hand, is slightly dated.



**ACTIN SOCCER** TBA

## **ABE'S ODDYSEE LEVEL SELECT**

Hold R1 and press Down, Right, Left, Right, Square, Circle, Square, Triangle. Circle, Square, Right, Left at the first option screen

## **VIEW FMV SEQUENCES**

Hold R1 and press Up, Left, Right, Square, Circle, Triangle, Square, Right, Left, Up, Right at the first option screen

## **GREEN AIR MINES**

Hold R1 and press Up, Left, Right, Square, Circle, Cross during the game. Abe will produce a green air mine every time he breaks wind

## **INSTANT VOICE PUZZLE SOLUTION**

Hold R1 and press Triangle, Up, Circle, Left, Cross, Down, Square, Right during the game. You can now use any sound to solve the game's voice puzzles

**ACTIN SOCCER** 00014

## **ACTIN SOCCER BONUS PLAYER**

At the title screen, hold down Select + Upper Left to get a hidden Gremlin Star named Cross

**ADIDAS POWER SOCCER** 00189

## **ADIDAS POWER SOCCER DREAM TEAM**

Press L2 + R2 + Square + Cross several times at the player select/formation screen that appears before the match begins until the name of your team changes to 'Dream Team'

**AIR COMBAT** 00007

## **AIR COMBAT ENTERING CHEAT MODE**

Press R1 + Circle when the bird logo is displayed before the 'Now Loading' screen. A black screen with the phrase 'Now Loading' and bouncing CDs in the background will confirm that cheat mode is active. Each time a code is successfully entered, a small namco character will appear in the lower-left corner

## **999,999,000 CREDITS**

Enter cheat mode and press Down, Circle, Triangle, Triangle, Circle, Triangle, Circle, Triangle, Circle + Triangle, then press and hold Circle + Triangle again at the bouncing CD screen. Reg in the game and enter the fighter selection screen. The amount of credits available will be set to the maximum

# TOP SECRET

## CHANGE PLANE'S COLOUR

Press Up, Down, Left, Right, Up, Down, Left, Right, then hold R1 at the bouncing CD screen. For two player mode, replace the controller actions with Left, Right, Left, Right, Down, Up, Down, Up, Circle, Circle, Triangle, Triangle e, then press and hold Triangle again. You now have a different coloured plane.

## CHANGE WINGMAN PLANE'S COLOUR

R1 + Start 10 times

## HIDDEN MINI-GAME

Go to the cheat mode then press Up, Left, Down, Right. Begin the game, then return to the title screen. A mini-game lasting approximately six seconds will begin while the main game loads again. The Ace Combat can be controlled with Left or L2, and Circle or R2. Press R1 to switch between three control options. Destroy as many of the ships and missiles as possible before the small bird walks from the left to right side of the screen.

## EXTRA FIGHTERS

Complete the game under the easy difficulty level. Watch the credits then the phrase 'Extra 10' will appear on the top right corner of the title screen. The extra fighters will be sat next to the main ones.

**EXTRA 10**

## ALIEN TRILOGY LEVEL SELECT

Enter COLVXXX, (xxx being the level you want to skip to) as a password. The phrase 'Cheat Activated' will appear to confirm the code is working. Now quit the game and start with the pistol. If you want to see the end sequence type 'COLV34'.

## GOOD MODE

The password '1G0TP1NK8C DB00TSON' will give you everything.

## POWER SHOTGUN

Pause the game and press Triangle, Circle, Square.

**EXTRA 20**

## BUST-A-MOVE 2 ANOTHER WORLD

Press R1, Up, L2, Down when 'Press Start' appears on the title screen. This will give you 27 faster levels to try out.

## CHARACTER SELECT

Start a puzzle game. Press Left, Left, Up, Down, L1 + L2 + R1 + R2 at the map (alphabet) screen. A character select screen will appear.

**EXTRA 20**

## COMMAND & CONQUER VIEW ENTIRE MAP

Hold L1 + R2 + L1 + L2 + Circle + Square while the game loads and hold them until the mission briefing begins.

## IN-GAME CHEATS

Pause and press the desired combo.

## INSTANT ION CANNON

Right, Down, Left, Left, Down, Right Right, Down, Left, Cross, Square, Triangle

## INSTANT AIR STRIKE

Right, Down, Left, Left, Down Right, Left, Down, Left, Cross, Square, Circle

## INSTANT NUKE STRIKE

Right, Down, Left, Left, Down, Right, Right, Down, Left, Cross, Up, Cross

## UNLIMITED MONEY

Right, Down, Down, Left, L1, Left, Right, Down Left for an additional 5000 credits.

Repeat when required.

## BONUS LEVEL

Enter PATSUX as a password on the CDI disc. A bonus level with \$10,000, extra Tiberium, and 12 commands will begin.

## COVERT OPERATIONS MISSIONS

COVERTOPS (can be used on either disc)

## GDI MISSION CODES

- 2 4SP55BEN4
- 3 GCSA7DA419
- 4 C9R0F2AD0
- 5 OK3NYYNO
- 6 S06262HH
- 7 GTJ2N851
- 8 RZ6MT054Y
- 9 C99X345PC
- 10 EAYH05N
- 11 4SP50QXAO
- 12 MWLPU55
- 13 SZMYPPOF8
- 14 GTJ2PV460
- 15 457ED7G0L

## NOD MISSIONS

- 2 C99AXW8
- 3 RZNLQ23NL
- 4 W1954KWL
- 5 W15DASR8
- 6 BPH MR53W
- 7 GTJKW0DK
- 8 YKK424K3D
- 9 874LCPLT4
- 10 AB5PAH4W
- 11 OK3UK0F94
- 12 QCDUM5K2
- 13 SZP09V058

**EXTRA 20**

## CSC: RED ALERT CHEAT MODE

Click on the 'Teams' button menu with Circle, or the Right Mouse Button. Then

move the pointer over the following icons on the tool bar and press Circle or the Right Mouse Button on each.

## Instant victory

Cross, Square, Square, Circle, Triangle, Circle

## Instant A-Bomb

Circle, Cross, Circle, Triangle, Square, Triangle

## Parabomb

Square, Cross, Circle, Cross, Triangle

## Instant \$1000

Square, Square, Circle, Cross, Triangle, Circle

## Convert ore to civilians

Cross, Circle, Triangle, Triangle, Circle, Cross

## Change ore to crystals to gold

Square, Circle, Square, Cross, Circle, Circle

## Instant chronoshift

Triangle, Circle, Circle, Square, Square, Cross

## Reveal map

Square, Triangle, Circle, Cross, Triangle, Square

## SOVIET PASSWORDS

- 1 170LXJG6
- 2 VNRWQ0284
- 3 XN37MCS0
- 4 LH06FZZQ
- 5 BUUV20FF
- 6 AVYQ10Y48
- 7 LZJR1MOAN
- 8 YQX4C9G6H
- 9 IQES08LE0
- 10 RKPJ0JXA
- 11 CDKLV7Q4
- 12 8T5GDK25
- 13 XSCDE0KN8

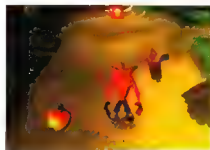
## ALLIED PASSWORDS

- 1 L295E4HPN
- 2 F0WEL900
- 3 ECSNAHT
- 4 98VYZA28



For more Bust-A-Move 2 credits press Left, Right, R1, R2, L2, L1, Up, Down in the option menu. A 30-second timer will appear in the upper-right corner. Quickly highlight the 'Credit' selection and repeatedly tap X or Circle to add up to 29 credits to the current total. Handy that.

# TIPS AND CHEATS



Try our devastating super password for *Crash Bandicoot* or enter your name as **TohYPaKk** (more upper and lower case letters) in *Destruction Derby 2* for a spanking FMV sequence. The choice is yours.

5 P4XSAC2VC  
6 FMNA6U08  
7 7XIQW4KQI  
8 WPLAGU2G  
9 4TNT8R,2I  
10 FZ0ZY7ZQA  
11 X9FJ2VJZ  
12 SRNHTXLRJ  
13 J7VEW7T09  
14 QLDAPYHL  
15 17LE3FDV

**VIEWCODE** 00344

## CRASH BANDICOOT SUPER PASSWORD

Enter the following sequence at the pass word screen for access to all 32 levels, all gems, and both keys. After entering the first line, two more lines will appear. Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Square, Cross, Triangle, Circle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Circle, Square, Triangle, Cross, Cross, Cross, Cross.

**VIEWCODE** 00967

## CRASH 2 RETURN TO BOSS STAGES

Position Crash on the centre platform. Hold 1 + R1 + L2 + R2 = Triangle and press Up when Crash points up or down. Remember that you can only go to bosses you've already beat.

## BONUS VOODOO MASK

Hold Up + Circle when Crash dies.

## EXTRA LIVES

Jump on the baby polar bear's head in the

second warp room (leve 6-10) ten times to collect ten extra lives.

**VIEWCODE** 00008

## DESTRUCTION DERBY MONASTERY RUINS

REFFECT

No Damage

DAMAGE

Choose number of competitors

NPLAYERS

Smoking opponents

DERBYMAN

Monkey secret

Go to DD Championship then type

MONKEY as your name. Start the game and perform five 360s. A monkey will begin running around the track. Hitting the monkey is worth a large amount of points.

## Ridge Racetype track

Go to two-player mode, enter 'Ridge' as player one's name and 'Racer' as player two's name.

## Easy four points

Hold Accelerate + Right briefly at the start of the race.

**VIEWCODE** 00293

## DESTRUCTION DERBY 2

Enter the codes as your name to register them.

## All tracks

MAC'S-POO then start a practice race for the new tracks.

Animated credits CREDIT2

**VIEWCODE** TBA

## DIE HARD TRILOGY

To enter the codes pause the game then highlight the Quit option holding R2 as you enter the code.

**VIEWCODE**

## DIE HARD 1

Invincibility

Right, Up, Down, Square

Ammunition

Down, Square, Square, Right

Targets fly to heaven

Down, Square, Triangle, Down

Reverse directions

Right, Square, Triangle, Right

Display coordinates

Left, Circle, Down, Square

Skeleton mode

Triangle 10 times, Right, Right, Right

Silly mode

Down, Circle, Circle, Down, Triangle, Down

Strange deaths

Circle, Circle, Square, Square, Right

Unlimited ammunition, various guns

Right, Up, Down, Down, Square, Right

**VIEWCODE**

## DIE HARD 2

Map editor and invincibility

Right, Up, Down, Square

Skeleton mode

Down, Square, Triangle, Down

Extra ammunition

Right, Square, Left, Circle, Triangle, Down

Invincibility

Down, Triangle, Right, Square

## FREE BERETTA

Shoot the helicopter until it blows up for a free Beretta.

**VIEWCODE**

## DIE HARD 3

Big mode

Left, Triangle, Right, Down

Fergus mode

Circle, Down, Down, Triangle, Cross, Square

Levitating car

Right, Square, Left, Triangle, Cross, Square, Down

Flat shaded mode

Down, Up, Left, Right, Down, Up, Left, Left

Slow motion

Left, up, Left, Left, Square, Down

Sky cam view

Circle, Right, Down, Square, Triangle, Left

Chase view

Down, Circle, Down, Circle

Very slow motion

Circle, Down, Down, Square, Right

999 turbos

Circle, Circle, Square, Square, Down, Down, Cross, Cross

Infinite lives

Left, Circle, Up, Down, Square, Right

Fuzzy car dice

Right, Circle, Left, Left, Square, Down

Flying saucer mode

Right, Square, Triangle, Down, Cross, Cross, Cross

**VIEWCODE** 00132

## DOOM

To enter the codes pause the game then enter the combo

## MAP ALL LINES

Triangle, Triangle, L2, R2, L2, R2, R1, Square

## MAP ALL ITEMS

Triangle, Triangle, L2, R2, L2, R2, R1, Circle

## INVINCIBILITY

Down, L2, Square, R1, Right, L1, Left, Circle

## WEAPONS, AMMO, KEYS

Cross, Triangle, L1, Up, Down, R2, Left, Left

## LEVEL SELECT

Right, Left, R2, R1, Triangle, L1, Circle, Cross. Then scroll through the levels using Left or Right then press any button to skip.

## TRANSPARENT WALLS

L1, R2, L2, R1, Right, Triangle, Cross, Right

**VIEWCODE** 00478

## EXCALIBUR 2555 A.D.

Pause the game and enter these codes

Full health

Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Square,



# TOP SECRET

Square, Square, Square, Square

## Full weapon

Triangle, Triangle, Square, Square, Circle, Circle, Square, Square

## Display collision boxes

Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Square, Circle, Square, Square

## Level skip

Square, Circle, Square, Triangle, Circle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle

**ADVANCED** TBA

## FADE TO BLACK

Enter the cheat mode password to turn on the menu then enter any of the below codes

## ENTER CHEAT MODE

Square Triangle, Circle, Cross, Circle, Triangle

## VIEW FMV SEQUENCES

Square, Cross, Circle, Triangle, Circle, Cross

## LEVEL SELECT

Circle, Circle, Triangle, Cross, Square, Square Start a new game then pause it Use the level skip menu then press Circle to go to it

## PERMANENT SHIELD

Square, Circle, Circle, Square, Triangle, Cross

## INVINCIBILITY

Triangle, Cross, Triangle, Triangle, Square, Circle

**ADVANCED** TBA

## FINAL BOOM

Pause the game to enter the following codes

**Weapons, ammunition, and keys**  
Cross, Triangle, L1, Up, Down, R2 Left, Left

## Map all lines

Triangle, Triangle, L2, R2, L2, R2, R1, Square

## Map all objects

Triangle, Triangle, L2, R2, L2, R2, R1, Circle

## Invincibility

Down, L2, Square, R1, Right, L1, Left, Circle

## Level select

Right, Left, R2, R1, Triangle, L1, Circle, Cross

## Transparent walls

L1, R2, L2, R1, Right, Triangle, Cross, Right

## MASTER LEVEL

- 2 610QNNF735
- 3 FRZ51P-4D
- 4 R834MGHR51
- 5 QWC5CS83Q5
- 6 NJ6ARFRPM
- 7 NIJ74MYS9R
- 8 B11TMQBW64
- 9 JKKNL7D443

10 28RFD055YX

11 C66Y2LSCGG

12 CR85XVNB0

13 C33V2DHGCH-K

## LEVEL 2

2 7CC-PX0746

3 YZCLPX2 56

4 XHNSYB965

5 75NK VCZ20

6 C2253RNRM-

7 NT33\_RNDCB

8 L\_T84KV02

## LEVEL 3

10 I6PQCGVOZ

11 WHHTNAP565

12 01JQYV3N34

13 5MM02ZGF21

14 HK25JRQDNL

15 5772MKWACF

16 78R8351VX

17 J26DCG3PNL

**ADVANCED** 00298

## FORMULA ONE

Hold Select then quickly press the button combo while on any of the practice, qualify or race option screens.

## BUGGY MODE

Right, Up, Triangle, Left, Up, Square, Triangle

## BIKE MODE

Down, Up, Circle, Triangle, Right, Up, Square, Triangle

## LAVA TRACK

Square Circle, Up, Right, Right, Circle, Cross

## BONUS TRACK (FRAMEOUT CITY)

Left, Circle, Circle, Triangle, Triangle, Circle, Up, Right

**ADVANCED** 00082

## G-POLICE INVINCIBILITY

Hold L1 + R2 + Square and press Left during the mission briefing. This has to be entered for every mission

## ALL WEAPONS, UNLIMITED AMMO

Hold L2 + R1 + Circle and press Left at the Weapons Loadout screen. Again, this has to be repeated for each mission.

Enter the following codes on the password screen

**Secret missions** PANTALON  
**Fast civilian traffic** BENIHILL  
**Enable sirens** WOODWOOD  
**Bonus camera angle** SUPACAM

**ADVANCED** TBA

## GRAND THEFT AUTO

## INVINCIBILITY

Press Square, Triangle, Circle, Cross



Cross, Circle, Triangle, Square at the main menu

## CHEAT MODES

Enter the cheat code as your name

**BSTAR** Everything  
**CHUFF** No Police  
**WEWHEY** City skip  
**SKYBABIES** Level Select

**ADVANCED** TBA

## HEART OF DARKNESS CHEAT MODE

Hold L1 + L2 + R1 + R2 on control or two and turn on the PlayStation. Keep the buttons pressed and enter the options screen from the main menu with controller on. Then, choose the 'Load Game' option from the 'Treasure' screen



**F1 97: VIRTUALLY VIRTUAL** - VR style graphics. **LITTLE WHEELZ** - Fat tyres. **PI MAN** - Wipeout mode. **ZOOM LENSE** - Melicam. **BOX CHATTER** - Sprite commentators. **BILLY BONUS** - Four extra tracks. **CATS BOGS** - Rain frogs.

# DON'T JUST READ ABOUT IT... EXPERIENCE IT!



## V-RALLY 2

PSM BRINGS YOU THE WORLD EXCLUSIVE REVIEW OF WHAT COULD JUST BE THE BEST RALLY GAME EVER! MOVE OVER COLIN MCRAE? FIND OUT WITHIN!

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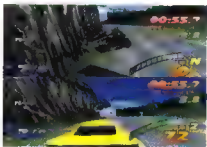
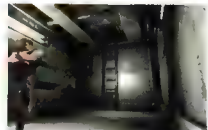
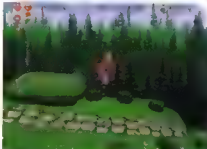
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# ISSUE 47 ON SALE WEDNESDAY 16 JUNE





# TIPS AND CHEATS



## Tune test driver

Left + Cross, Right + Select + Square at the main menu.

## Player's car jumps

Square, Cross, Square

## All cars jump

Up + Square, Up + Cross, Up + Square, Up + Cross, Up + Square, Up + Cross

## Crazy race

Up, Left, Right + Select

## Invisible car

Square + Cross, L2 + R2, Square + Cross L1 + R1, Square + Cross

## Super car

Select + Square, Select + Cross, Select + Square + Cross.

## Hyper car

Select + Square, Select + Circle, Select + Square + Circle.

## Mirror mode

Left + Cross, Down + Tr angle, Right + Square

## Interactive tracks

Down + Start, Up + Start, Select, Start

## Long tracks

Up + Select, Down + Select, Start, Select

## High voices

Up, Tr angle + Up, Triangle

## POWERUP TBA

## RESIDENT EVIL

### CHANGE CLOTHES

Finish the game rescuing both other characters, and you'll get the Special Key. Now go into the room with the big mirror, which is next to the double blue doors on the ground floor of the mansion. Explore in here, and you'll use the Special key and enter a wardrobe, where you can change your clothes.

## UNLIMITED ROCKET LAUNCHER

Fin sh the game in under three hours

## POWERUP 00001

## RIDGE RACER EXTRA CARS

Shoot every ship in the Galaga loading game. When 'Perfect' appears on screen you'll have eight more cars to try.

## REVERSE TRACKS

Win all four variations for the reversed options to open

## RACE ON MIRROR IMAGE OF TRACK

Accelerate from the line until you reach the brow of the hill. Now spin the car around and head straight to the wall to drive around a backwards course

## THE DEVIL CAR

To add it to your collection beat it in a Time Trial

## POWERUP 00242

## RIDGE RACER

## REVOLUTION

### HOMING LASER IN GALAGA '88

Hold L1 + R1 + Select + Triangle + Down when you turn on the PlayStat on and you'll get a perfect score in Galaga '88

## BUGGY CARS

Clear 'Galaga '88 using the homing laser and you'll get the fantastic Bug Mode

## EXTRA CARS

Shoot all the ships during the Galaga '88 loading game (a perfect score is not required), to chose from eight additional cars

## SECRET CARS

Finish first in each track (novice, advanced, and expert), then return to race each track in Time Trial mode. After beating each track, the special car (Devil 13, Kid Car 13 or White Angel 0) for that track will be available

## EXTRA TRACKS

Finish all the tracks in first place to race a reverse version of the tracks. Finishing the reversed tracks in first place also unlocks the hidden 'Scene' menu.

## REVERSED TRACKS

Accelerate away to about 60mph then spin around and drive into the wall for a reversed track

## POWERUP 00577

## SOUL BLADE

Beat Soul Edge then watch the ending. Now go back to the map and press Kick and Select Move. Watch as the CPL automatically selects the best nation of the last weapon so all you need to do now is win the next fight

## FIGHT AS SOUL EDGE

Enter ALL as a name or build up 20 hours worth of gameplay on your memory card

## Siegfried, Sophitia, and Sophitia!

Win all eight weapons for both Siegfried and Sophitia to play as Siegfried and Sophitia! They are alternate characters that have different costumes. Sophitia's

third version, Sophitia!, will be accessible after obtaining all 70 weapons in Edge Master mode

## FIGHT AS HAN MYONG

Perform Hwang's alternative ending followed by Seung Mi Na's alternate endings

## POWERUP TBA

## SOVIET STRIKE

Enter the following codes as passwords

### Unlimited armour

IAMWOMAN

### Unlimited ammunition

TRANCELUV

### Unlimited fuel

EARTHFIRST

### Unlimited attempts

ELVISLIVES

### Double damage

DAVEDITCHER

### Unlimited ammo, fuel, invincibility

MIDNIGHT

### Unlimited ammunition, fuel, attempts

FLGAZI

### Unlimited ammo, fuel, attempts, and armour

THEB GBOYS

## POWERUP 00005

## TEKKEN

### TWO SHIP GALAGA

Hold Triangle + Cross + Up + L1 on controller two for a second ship during the load game. Press Select to restart a stage. Restarting the last stage will return the game to stage one

## EXTENDED GALAGA

Hit at least 40 all on ships during the first wave of Galaga. Then, press Select when the phrase 'Number Of Hits' appears. The next wave of Galaga will be played instead of continuing to Tekken

## FIGHT AS DEVIL

### KAYZUA

Beat all eight stages of Galaga to pick the Devil Kazuya in one-player mode. No cheats may be used. After Tekken begins, highlight Kazuya in arcade mode and select him with Start. It's really just a purple-blue Kazuya, but still looks good!

## POWERUP 00255

## TEKKEN 2

### OPEN UP SUB-BOSSSES

Complete the game with each character

## FIGHT AS ROGER OR ALEX

Get to the third round of a one player fight and defeat your opponent with your last bit of energy. If the announcer says 'Great you'll fight either of two new characters. Complete the game and they'll be added to your memory card. This is best done by setting the round count to one and skill level to easy

## BIG HEADS & HANDS

Once you've got all the characters listed Select as you. Choose the player until the fight begins. Try pressing it again for even more comedy value. Kuma is a good one to try

# TOP SECRET



## KAZUYA IN A NATTY PURPLE SUIT

Completely finish the game by capturing all the characters, then select Kazuya with Start

## WIRE-FRAME VIEW

Once you have unlocked all the hidden characters, hold L1 and L2 at the main menu screen. Now go into any mode, still holding these buttons. When you start you'll be looking through your own wireframe character

EXPLORE 00958

## TOCA TOURING CARS CHEAT MODE

Enter the code instead of your player's name. Tiff Needell will tell you if you got it right

- Disable collision detection CMNOH TS
- Better traction FLEX
- Disco background colours MDISCO
- All tracks unlocked HAMMO
- Helicopter view CMCOPTER
- Starry sky background CMSTARS
- Bonus cars CMGARAGE
- All cars unlocked CONGOGO
- Shoot other cars TANK
- Go-kart mode CMCHJH
- Aggressive cars CMMAYHEM
- Big hands on steering wheel CMHANDY
- Low gravity CMLCRAV
- Reverse falling rain CMRAINUP
- Raining cats and dogs CMCATDOC
- Fast mode X BOOSTME
- Film camera view CMFOJLOW
- Micro Machines type view CMMICRO

EXPLORE TBA

## TOMB RAIDER ALL WEAPONS AND AMMO RELOAD

Press Select to enter the inventory screen then press L1, Triangle, L2, R2, R2, L2, Circle, L1



Typically, Codemasters packed *TOCA Touring Car Championship* with a slew of wacky cheats. Most of them are useless but they're all fun.

## LEVEL SKIP

Go to the inventory screen and press L2, R2, Triangle, L1, L1, Circle, R2, L2. Keep repeating this until you get to the level you want.

EXPLORE TBA

## TOMB RAIDER II LEVEL SKIP

During the game sidestep left, right, left, forward, back. Let go of R1, rotate three times on the spot, and perform a forward jump with mid-air roll.

## ALL WEAPONS

During the game sidestep Left, Right, Left, Forward, Release R1, rotate three times on the spot, and perform a back ward jump with mid-air roll

EXPLORE TBA

## V-RALLY CHEAT MODE

As the Infogrames logo appears press Up, Down, Triangle and Circle upon which 'Lock Off' should appear on screen. Now enter any cheat you want, just make sure you hold the final button of the code until you've chosen your language

## No time limit

18 extra narrow tracks

Restart in arcade mode

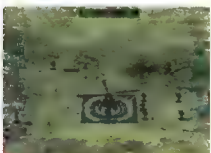
All cheats

Left+L1

Left+L2

Left+R2

Left+L2+L1+R1+R2



## ALL TRACKS

Hold L1 + R1 + Select, then press Square, Circle, Triangle, Circle, Square at the main menu. All tracks, including the secret Phantom class vehicle will be accessible

## UNLIMITED TIME

Press Start to pause the game then hold L1 + R1 + Select then press Triangle, Square, Circle, Cross, Triangle, Square, Circle, Cross.

## UNLIMITED WEAPONS

Press Start to pause the game, Hold L1 + R1 + Select, then press Cross, Square, Square, Circle, Circle, Triangle

## PHANTOM CLASS

Hold L1 + R1 + Select, then press Cross, Cross, Cross, Circle, Circle at the main menu. The Phantom class vehicle will be accessible

## PIRANHA TEAM

Hold L1 + R1 + Select, then press Cross, Cross, Cross, Cross, Circle, Triangle, Square at the main menu

## LYSTOK ISLAND AND SPILSKINANKE HIDDEN TRACKS

Hold L1 + R1 + Select, then press Square, Circle, Square, Triangle, Circle, Triangle, Cross, Triangle, Circle, Circle, Triangle, Cross, Cross, Square at the main menu

EXPLORE 00119

## WORMS NEW WEAPONS

Press Cross + Square eight times at the weapon options screen

## BOXING MATCH

Start a fire punch, quickly hold Square, press R1, L1, Circle. A boxing match featuring one worm from each team will begin. Defeat your opponent using just punches and dragonballs. Normal gameplay will resume after one worm is defeated

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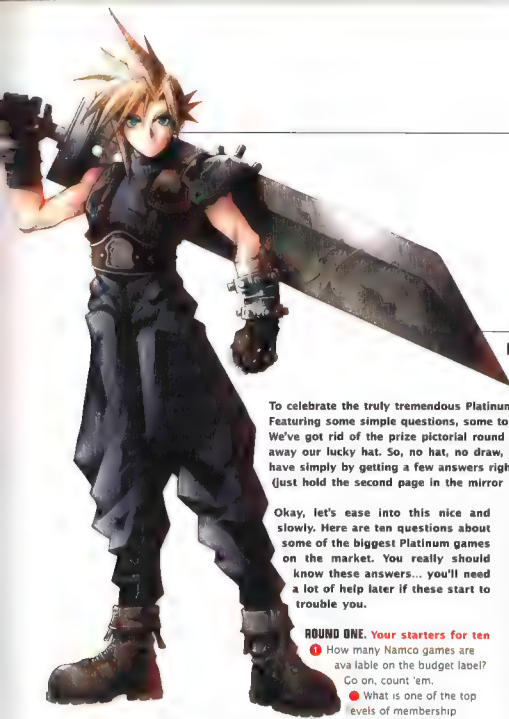
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# QUIZ:

## PLATINUM PUZZLERS

RECKON YOU KNOW EVERYTHING THERE IS TO KNOW ABOUT THE PLATINUM RANGE THEN? WELL, TRY THIS LITTLE LOT AND WE'LL FIND OUT JUST HOW GOOD YOU REALLY ARE. BEST OF BRITISH LUCK TO YOU...

To celebrate the truly tremendous Platinum range we've compiled what we reckon is one of the finest quizzes ever printed. Featuring some simple questions, some tough ones and a few foolishly hard teasers this will sort the guys from the gimps. We've got rid of the prize pictorial round too. While we were having our offices spring cleaned someone mistakenly threw away our lucky hat. So, no hat, no draw, no prize... unless, of course, you consider the massive amount of pride you can have simply by getting a few answers right that is... thought not. Oh well, at least this way it's a lot easier for you to cheat (just hold the second page in the mirror instead of flicking through the rest of the magazine).

Okay, let's ease into this nice and slowly. Here are ten questions about some of the biggest Platinum games on the market. You really should know these answers... you'll need a lot of help later if these start to trouble you.

### ROUND ONE. Your starters for ten

- 1 How many Namco games are available on the budget label? Go on, count 'em.

What is one of the top levels of membership available in the British Airways Executive Card scheme? A very simple question - think about it.

- 2 Which female adventurer can be seen searching for the Dagger of Xian? Surely not too hard either.

3 *Hercules* was based on the animated flick produced by which well known Hollywood studio?

- 4 What are the two cinematic trilogies available on the Platinum range?
- 5 Name the shooter which stars ace secret agent Richard Miller?

6 Bak appeared in which *Tekken* game?

- 7 Which development team produced *Destruction Derby 2*?

8 What does the PGA stand for in *PGA Tour '96*?

- 9 What's the name of the bad guy master race in *Abe's Odyssey*?

### ROUND TWO. Driving me wild!

Surely the most popular genre in the Platinum range is driving games. From the gritty grunt *TOCA* to the smooth throaty ride of *Porsche Challenge* there are some fantastic offerings. Here are ten questions to test just how much you know about the range.

- 1 What's the name of the secret driver in *Porsche Challenge*?
- 2 Where was *V-Rally* developed?
- 3 Which midget Mega Drive hit had its third incarnation converted to the PlayStation? Well?
- 4 What do you need to have to be able to play the *Ridge Racer* original track in the sequel *Ridge Racer Revolution*?
- 5 Which software team developed the original *Formula 1*?
- 6 Which coffee features prominently in the *TOCA* series?
- 7 The energy drink *Red Bull* appears in which Platinum future racer?
- 8 Which Electronic Arts PlayStation game first appeared on the 3DO console?
- 9 When were the first Platinum games released? (month and year please)
- 10 Name the game: Irrelevant Curried Goo (anagram). Remember, this section is all about racing games.

### ROUND THREE. Now things get tricky

We don't like to be too nasty with our quizzes but then it's about time we

sorted out the winners from the losers. These are hard; so think tough, big lad, you're going to need all the luck you can get in this round.

- 1 Name the two Westwood-developed Platinum games.
- 2 Who originally released *Worms* onto the budget brand?
- 3 Which was the first Platinum racing game to feature Dual Shock compatibility?
- 4 What is the current criteria for releasing a game on the Platinum label?
- 5 Which Platinum platformer was four years in development? Need a clue? Well, the main character is called Andy.
- 6 *Fade to Black* is the sequel to which Amiga platform effort?
- 7 What's the oldest game on the budget range?
- 8 What are the two Earth-bound heli-copter games available called?
- 9 Which *Soul Blade* character hails from the US and attacks with an axe?
- 10 What's the name of the first city visited in *Grand Theft Auto*?



**FINAL ROUND: Screentest**  
OK, the frivolity is out of the way so let's get serious. Here are ten screenshots from the fine selection of Platinum offerings. All we want you to do is take a good look at the creatively disguised shots and figure out exactly what they are. It might help to turn the page upside down or, if this is no good, try squinting. It sometimes works. Go on!



## THE VERDICT: GOLD, SILVER OR PLATINUM?

**0-10**  
Shocking! This is so bad we're speechless. Well, no we're not but we can't say just how dreadful this really is without using words that we're not allowed to print. Let's just say, we're not impressed.

**10-25**  
Right slap-bang in the middle of mediocrity. Think of this as the equivalent of one of those games which can't get onto the Platinum label but still sell really cheaply. It really is that bad. Try it again, see if you do better.

**25-30**  
There are many words appropriate for this range of results. Such as average, reasonable, medium, moderate, indifferent. Catch our drift yet? Still, at least you didn't fall in with the previous losers.

**30-35**  
Now you are obviously someone who really knows their stuff. Bet you spend most of your weekends scanning the games racks checking the latest releases don't you? Don't be embarrassed... we do too!

**35+**  
The only people who could score in this range are either sat in this very office, work for Sony or have a seriously impressive knowledge of everything Platinum. Congratu-bloomin-lations.

## ANSWERS

10. 2001 Blade  
9. Porsche Challenge  
8. CT  
7. Die Hard Trilogy  
6. Doom  
5. Track and Field  
4. Time Crisis  
3. Worms  
2. Track and Field  
1. Track and Field

10. 2001 Blade  
9. Porsche Challenge  
8. CT  
7. Die Hard Trilogy  
6. Doom  
5. Track and Field  
4. Time Crisis  
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3. Worms  
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8. CT  
7. Die Hard Trilogy  
6. Doom  
5. Track and Field  
4. Time Crisis  
3. Worms  
2. Track and Field  
1. Track and Field

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# JUST THE FAX

CELEBS QUIZZED, DEVELOPERS GRILLED, GAMES EXPLAINED, Q



Just the facts indeed. Bass monster for the mighty Ash, Mark Hamilton and the rest of the band have just had Lose Control splattered all over the soundtrack to Sony's Gran Turismo - a far cry from the X-Wing shenanigans of the trio's beloved Star Wars, but given the rate that GT's cars can peg it round those beautifully formed tracks, the perfect PlayStation replication of the band. Honest. Anyway, let fax machine type battle begin...

- 1) Have you or any of the band actually played Gran Turismo? The perfect car simulator or just the safest way to drink and drive?
  - 1/ Yes, we have got the game, but we've just come out of the studio where there's a Play Station. So I've been hanging about at the local Virgin Megastore like a cheapskate hogging the display stand. It is simply the best, most challenging driving game about. They need to make a big screen arcade version for everyone to show off on after they've practised at home. I heard it sold 44,000 on it's first day of release in the UK and is No 1 in the games chart so that's all good!
- 2) How did you get involved with Gran Turismo? A Japanese driving sim isn't the first thing that comes to mind when hearing Kung Fu...
  - 2/ About 8 months ago we got asked if we'd let Play Station have 'Lose Control' for this game and at the time thought it'd be cool and said OK. Then, for ages we heard nothing about it, what it was about or anything, then 2 weeks ago I got dragged to review the game and interviewed about it, so when I realised what a huge game Gran Turismo was and how brilliant it was I was pretty excited about it all! The rest of the soundtrack music is brilliant as well, especially the MSP remix by the Chemical Brothers, so it's really quite flattering to be involved.
- 3) Do you get much time to play games at all - back of the van etc. What's your favourite game? With bands, it's usually Wipeout 2097...
  - 3/ I play computer games all the time but not just console games. I waste about £5.00 a day on pinball and I'm right addicted to Fruit machines. I've always gotta be competing for something, whether it be the jackpot, hi-score or the fastest lap. I'd spend several hours palying Fit Soccer, John Madden's football, Wipeout or anything competitive against somebody else, that's what makes games fun for me anyway. I'm not really into games that you play on your own. Recording studios and touring bands always have machines about and we take our own as well to get through the waiting about and long drives etc.
- 4) Tonight, you are the designers for the new Star Wars game. Describe your monstrous PlayStation creation...
  - 4/ It would be an amazing cross between Mario-Cart and Wipe-Out with all the sprites and space ships being drawn in Japanese Manga-style you could pick any character and vehicle from the Triology and go head to head fighting for a night of cyber-sex with Princess Leia

Mark and Ash, we thank you very much.

Official UK PlayStation Platinum Special  
**PlayStation**  
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PLATINUM SPECIAL



To become a member of Sony's Platinum range a game must now shift over 500,000 copies in its first six months on sale, meaning only the best, most successful titles get to don the prestigious silver box. They're all reviewed inside...

## ALL-TIME CLASSICS



### CLASSIC ■ ON THE CD

Gran Turismo  
WipEout 2097  
Tomb Raider  
Tomb Raider 2  
G-Police  
Porsche Challenge

Ridge Racer Revolution  
Tekken 2  
Doom  
F1 '97  
Crash Bandicoot 2  
Oddworld: Abe's Oddysey

